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**LIFE AND PROGRESS IN AUSTRALASIA**





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LIFE AND PROGRESS  
IN  
AUSTRALASIA

BY  
MICHAEL DAVITT, M.P.  
AUTHOR OF  
"LEAVES FROM A PRISON DIARY," ETC.

WITH TWO MAPS

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## PREFACE

**T**HE following pages are an outcome of a recent seven months' journey through the seven Australasian colonies. The limited time occupied in the tour affirms, of course, the equally limited means afforded for learning enough of these countries to write with authority upon their populations, resources, politics, and progress. Nothing is claimed, however, by the author beyond an opportunity of gratifying a desire to make these distant and intensely interesting lands a little better known to the public of Great Britain and Ireland than they are at present. If this wish does not to some extent palliate the perpetration of a volume of travelling impressions, the writer must only console himself by falling back upon the generous latitude allowed to themselves by this class of offending mortals, in which to inflict their views of people abroad upon the innocents at home.

Considering who the Australians are, it is amazing how small is the fund of general knowledge we possess about the countries they inhabit. This is not a result of distance, or of any indifference as to what may or may not happen at the Antipodes. Nothing of the kind. It only requires a cricket match at Adelaide or a boat race on the Parramatta, in which the fame of some "home" team or sculler is at stake, to excite the keenest competition among newspapers in satisfying the popular

demand for information upon the event in question. Curiosity about the people and countries out there dies away, more or less, after the match is over, or remains dormant until a new gold mine awakens another kind of European desire to know something more concerning the particular region of the discovery. Cricket and gold mines, and not school books or newspapers, are the monitors that have taught the general public of these islands practically all they know about the rising communities in the Southern Pacific.

This is not as it should be. There are innumerable reasons why we ought to cultivate a more intimate knowledge of the countries inhabited by Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen at the other end of the earth. Be our races, politics, or prejudices what they may, the new States which our respective kinsmen are united in building at the Antipodes should attract a more considerate and more constant attention from all classes, but particularly from working men, than they have hitherto obtained. The need for more sympathetic knowledge and greater intimacy is becoming daily more apparent, and it is in the conviction that this closer touch and freer intercourse will soon be an indispensable part of the thinking and working life of Great Britain and Ireland that this volume makes its appearance.

I try to give, in short sketches of each colony, the information and impressions, gathered on this tour, about the general life, resources, politics, parties, progress, prospects, and scenery of the countries travelled over. The treatment of such an area of topics must necessarily be somewhat kaleidoscopic. Any attempt to deal fully with all that concerns seven such countries would require as many volumes as there are colonies. The



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chief purpose of the book, however, is to interest its readers in Australasia and its peoples, and not to write their history.

The Antipodean Colonies possess only a few large cities. These usually monopolise most of the attention of untravelled readers and of many visitors from the old countries. In fact, with people who have not yet journeyed so far, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Wellington, and Coolgardie stand for Australasia. The cities named rightly stand for a great deal that is to the credit of their respective colonies in wealth, progress, and enlightenment; and I try to give my readers a description of them, along with some facts relating to their wonderful growth and prosperity. But I purposely give equal attention to the smaller towns and villages I went through in each colony, so as to point out where rising cities of the future are likely to be found, and to make places never heard of "at home," except by a few, known to a wider circle. It is the country behind the larger cities which has made them what they are. It is to such places, and not to overcrowded centres, that the attention of those who may possibly wish to seek out a new home should be drawn.

The views expressed upon the Coolgardie, Hannans, and other Australian goldfields, are not those of an expert, or of one skilled in the "bulling" or "bearing" of sources of investment. My object in going to these places was one of mere curiosity—to see the life and study some of the characteristics of mining camps. What I have to say, therefore, about the mines visited by me must be discounted in its possible value by my want of trained or technical knowledge of mining generally.

I went to the Murray River Labour Settlements, in South Australia, to see and learn all I could about them—their origin,

working, and prospects; and I record my impressions of these tentative Labour Utopias in special chapters. I also took a similar journey to the centre of the Kanaka Labour trouble in Queensland, to study the much-debated moral and economic problem involved in the capitalist plan for dispensing with white workers in the sugar plantations of Australia.

To the student of popular principles of government and of social and industrial legislation there are no more interesting countries in the world of practical politics than those of Australasia. The history of their growth and development is a most fascinating story. A few years ago they were but infant settlements of British and Irish emigrants, trying, in emergency efforts at an organized society, to make the laws and customs of the old countries fit in with the requirements of the new. To-day they possess almost all the stature and virility of self-governing nations, and are teaching, by their examples, not alone the parent countries, but other lands as well, the courageous wisdom of progressive legislation on most of the vexed social and economic problems of Europe and America.

Australasia is, in fact, an industrial empire of unfederated Labour nations, where neither wars nor foreign policies intrude their demoralising influences upon the peaceful programmes and progress of domestic government. The people have the fullest and most effective control of their own affairs. There are no ruling classes. The Conservatism which shows itself in any organized form in the Legislatures has to be more democratic in its professions and programmes than an opportunist English Liberalism dares yet to be. This stand Australian conservatism can well afford to take, where the laws of a governing democracy give to property a safer protection than obtains in any class-ruled





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country in the world of to-day. And this, paradoxical as it seems to some, is what must obtain wherever the law has the stamp and strength of a real popular will upon it. In the United States the conservatism of the law is sometimes more savage than civilized in its violent defence of vested interests, and in the upholding of the public order which guards them. Property has been safer in Paris under a Communist Municipality than it ever was under the Third Empire. And this will inevitably continue to be the case everywhere the people are well and wisely trusted with the full responsibility of organizing the constitutional guardianship of their own concerns in their own way.

The cry raised against measures passed by some of the colonial Legislatures, that they were socialistic in character, "and would drive capital away," was but the expression of the usual selfish and short-sighted feeling which assails all progress at first, and learns soon afterwards how to reap new benefits therefrom. Such fears have now subsided, or will soon do so, as yearly returns continue to exhibit increasing prosperity among the people, and a growing revenue from a just and graduated system of taxation in some, if not in all, the colonies. The statesmanship which has ensured this security for personal rights and belongings, along with a judicious application of the principle of State Socialism, like that now obtaining in New Zealand and South Australia, for the equal benefit of all the people, is young, but it is wise in its ruling methods and maxims. It has given a great principle of human nature direct application in its enactments. It has taken the conservatism of caste and privilege and distributed its law-abiding spirit throughout the whole community; rightly recognizing that "content" is only another and a better term for "conservative," and that a satisfied people are

the strongest bulwark against possible danger to the State, and never likely to become a political menace to the liberties of the commonweal, nor a serious disturbing element in any just and well-regulated system of society.

As some of my readers may probably be interested in the questions of Prison and Criminal Reform, I give, in a few brief chapters, some impressions of visits paid by me to the principal gaols of the seven colonies. Many of the enlightened reforms advocated for British and Irish prisons are already in application out there, and the results have been very satisfactory.

Finally, if these sketches will only tend to make those seven young and growing countries of Australasia better known in these less favoured old ones than they now are, and will induce some of the travelling health-seekers and holiday votaries to visit the most hospitable of people, and enjoy some of the most enchanting scenery in the world, the purpose for which the book was written will be fully satisfied.

M. D.

*December, 1897.*



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# LIFE AND PROGRESS IN AUSTRALASIA

## PART I.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### “THROW THAT MAN OVER!”

**L**IFE on board a well-equipped ocean liner nowadays, on a long voyage like that to Australia, has been so fully and frequently described in changeless detail that the reading public may be content to take “everybody’s experience” as that of any individual traveller. I will, therefore, spare my readers an infliction of this kind. In addition, I will pass by the Rock of Gibraltar, and even Naples and its bay, with all their wealth of attractive scenery, without attempting the impossible task of saying anything about these places which has not been said a thousand times before. But I must halt for a short time at Port Said, while our ship is coaling. This was my third passing visit to the metropolis of Mediterranean infamies. Ten years previously I was stranded here, awaiting a vessel for the Holy Land, and I explored the place with some tourist friends from America. Our observations and informants enabled us to anticipate the conclusion come to by Kipling that there “ain’t no ten commandments” east of Suez, at any rate at Port Said. According to some authorities, Moses crossed from Egypt to Palestine quite close to where Viceopolis now stands.

One can easily imagine, after becoming acquainted with the town, the Devil following in his track, hoping to keep him away from Mount Sinai, and failing to do so, planting in his rage and disappointment the seeds of every Egyptian vice on a spot where no Mosaic or moral law would ever uproot the tares of human depravity. There are, it is said, Satan worshippers in some European capitals. They are overlooking the Mecca of their cult, for it is certain that his sable majesty has more gambling hells and dens of infamy of all kinds at Port Said, in proportion to its size and population, than in any other single spot of civilized land on earth.

One of the most interesting experiences in a "stay over" at this otherwise unsavoury place is that of watching the Arab porters coaling a ship. Officers have told me that they are the quickest and best workers in the world at this task. They sing all the time the work goes on, running round like so many huge ants, carrying their loads with the greatest ease amidst clouds of coal dust, as if coaling were a game of fun or frolic. Some of them are men of magnificent physique. They all work in bare feet, and with only a few patches of rags upon their bodies. Still, one finds it hard to convince himself, while observing them at their task, and listening to their singing and shouting, that they are unhappy in their tatters and sweat and coal dust. They are virtually the slaves of Arab contractors, who pay them about fifteenpence a day, and give this pay in kind. When one of them refuses to work, on these or any other terms, he is at once arrested, put in a lock-up for a day without food, and then flogged for his obstinacy, under Anglo-Egyptian laws. Those who save their meals and backs by conforming to the terms of the contractor, spend their earnings in the gambling dens of the Arab quarter.

I found no apparent change in Port Said for the ten years which had passed since my previous visit, except possibly that the perennial stench of the place had added a decade of vigour to its normal offensiveness.

After entering the Suez Canal our ship had to be "tied up," to allow a home-coming vessel to pass her, in accordance with the rule of the road which there obtains. While those on board were watching this interesting process, a European and an Arab were seen galloping down the right bank of the Canal as fast as a pair of Port Said donkeys could carry them. It was found that the European was one of our passengers, who had remained behind in the town, whereupon our captain ordered a boat to be

launched to bring him on board. We were then witnesses of the following occurrence. On the boat reaching the shore the Arab held out his hand for his fare, but the passenger coolly ignored the demand, and ordered the sailors to row to the ship. The Arab in great excitement followed into the boat, insisting upon being paid, when there suddenly rang out from the bridge above us in thundering tones the startling order, “Throw that man over!” Naturally, some of us who had watched the whole proceedings expected it would be the dishonest “bilker” who was to be ducked. We were mistaken. In a moment there was a splash, and in another a turbaned head was seen coming up from the surface of the canal wildly shouting for his fare. He held out both his hands towards the ship in the most piteous manner, appealing for his money. Many of the successful “bilker’s” fellow-passengers seemed to enjoy the scene, but many others, to their credit be it recorded, expressed their detestation of an act so flagrantly mean. There the Arab stood all the time, now wringing his hands in manifest agony of mind, now clapping them excitedly, and telling us with the eloquence born of the wrong we had witnessed how badly he was treated by one of us. For fully half an hour this pathetic scene continued, until the huge ship unloosed her temporary moorings and slowly sailed away. When all hope of payment had thus vanished, the Arab was seen turning towards his donkeys as if addressing them, and one could easily imagine him saying: “See how this Christian dog has treated me and you! We brought this accursed infidel here in time to catch his ship, and saved him much expense by so doing. You did not spare your speed nor did I my stick upon your hides that this giaour should not be left behind. And now, see our reward! May Allah and his Prophet take vengeance upon him, his friends, and their ship!” It is quite a coincidence, of course, but I must mention the fact in this short chapter all the same. The “bilker” died a few months afterwards of typhoid, at Coolgardie—at least so I learned from a fellow-passenger during my subsequent visit to the goldfields of Westralia—while the ship on which we all had voyaged has twice since then met with disasters which must have cost her owners tens of thousands of pounds. Moral: Don’t “bilk” a son of Mahommed, and don’t throw the wrong man into the Suez, or any other, canal.

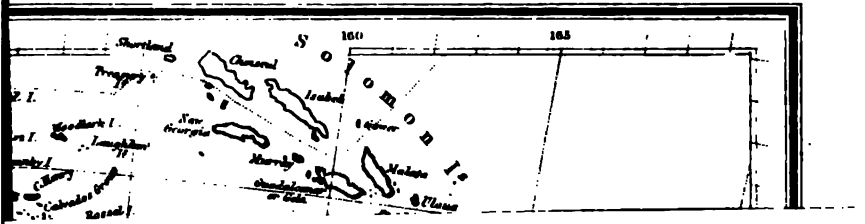
## CHAPTER II.

### EN ROUTE FOR COOLGARDIE.

MORE than half of my fellow-passengers were on their way to the West Australian goldfields, and, though my trip to Coolgardie did not take place until six months subsequently, I purpose embodying my impressions of this and the other places visited by me in this colony in the order which will give to those of my readers who have yet to see the enticing countries of the antipodes the clearest idea of their relative positions. I take the colonies geographically as you meet them on a voyage to Queensland by Melbourne and Sydney. That is to say, West Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, the five countries forming the island continent of Australia. Then there is the island of Tasmania, a hundred and seventy miles or more off the south coast of Victoria; and New Zealand, a thousand two hundred miles further south-east; making in all the seven colonies of Australasia.

Albany is the first port at which you call after leaving Colombo in Ceylon, and the town gives you a good impression of the young countries you are about to see. It is pleasantly situated on a small harbour inside of King George's Sound, and has the great advantage over Perth, the capital of Western Australia, of being a sea-port, with water deep enough to permit the largest ocean liners to come to anchor beyond the jetty. The Sound is almost landlocked, and is large enough to admit the whole British navy to its shelter. Albany's maritime position gives its ambitious citizens, who number two or three thousand of a population, grounds for a modest claim to have the capital of the colony transferred from the inaccessible Swan river to the ocean gateway of King George's Sound. They have, at any rate, the argument of earlier foundation, if that should count, as Albany is a five years older settlement than Perth. This is the port for which the in and outgoing European mail steamers all make. A large proportion of the imports to the colony are landed here









also; therefore, say the choice "lot" holders and prospective ground-rent landlords of Albany, "our city should be the seat of government." But unfortunately for the hopes of these tall-talking Albanians, the only one in the legislature at Perth who shares their views is the member for Albany.

The little town is well built. It has a somewhat sleepy look, except when a ship arrives with gold seekers for Coolgardie. They all wake up then, and sing for the instruction of the strangers the praises of the would-be capital. The climate is comparatively cool here in summer, and invites many people from the northern and warmer latitudes of the colony to make the Sound a holiday resort. All the houses look out upon the bay, and give the residents a most agreeable sea-coast prospect. The town rises gently from the shores up the slopes of a green ridge, and looks, in situation and general appearance, a clean and healthy place. Apart from the general industry of building hopes upon Albany's future greatness and prosperity, the only other industry that obtrudes its existence on the visitor's attention is lumbering. A few saw mills, together with the work of the railway which starts from here for Perth, are the chief sources of employment for its male population. Most of the houses in the town being detached residences, there is some gardening to be seen, along with a very creditable and pretty general cultivation of flowers.

Albany is "protected" by an imperial "fort" situated on a small hill east of the town, and commanding the Sound. There are a few soldiers and a couple of guns in the place. A single Japanese man-of-war steaming into the harbour would silence the "fort" and knock the would-be capital to smithereens, without running any serious risk to itself, in half an hour's well-directed firing.

The country through which the line to Perth runs, for a hundred miles north of Albany, is wild and apparently worthless. Scrub, tussock grass, sandy soil, and grey gums make up its general character. The Stirling Range of hills break in upon the view from the right (the east) as you journey along, and together with an abundance of the brightest of wild flowers make an occasional eye-relieving change in the monotony of the savage scenery. After passing through this scrub desert and nearing the small town of Beverley, a better kind of country, with average land, appears, and some cultivation and settlement are seen. Sandal wood, which is indigenous to these regions, is met with in large piles stacked along the railway track, ready

for exportation to the Joss-worshipping countries of the East. Both the country and the railway from Albany to Beverley belong to an English land company, which obtained the land concession in return for building the line, while "W. A." (as the colonists familiarly call their province) was a Crown colony. The State railway commences at Beverley, and takes you on to the capital, which is distant about three hundred miles from its would-be rival on King George's Sound.

Guildford, a pretty little village close to Perth, is found situated in a charming country where the Helena river joins the Swan. The beautiful Swan river is crossed here by an old rustic bridge, recalling convict labour and other early associations of the colony. Guildford was a real comfort to the eyes after the visual fatigue caused by the kind of country one was thankful to be carried through from Albany. It suggests, in its snug brick-built cottages, flower-stocked gardens, well-trimmed hedgerows, and general grassy surroundings, with the tree-lined river rolling lazily under the bridge, an English midland country scene. The bridge and the roads hereabout are the work of convicts. Some of the Fenian prisoners were employed in labour of this kind in this locality, and I visited a low building on one side of the village green which had answered for a temporary prison while some of the roads in the neighbourhood were being built. Iron bars in the windows are left to speak the former purpose of the place, which is now transformed into a small convent of the Sisters of Mercy. It is an honoured tradition with the good sisters that one of the best and most cultured of Irishmen—the late John Boyle O'Reilly—had slept as a prisoner beneath what is now their roof-tree. I relate the story of his escape and the subsequent rescue of the Fenian prisoners from Fremantle in the final chapters of this volume.

There is an hour's charming drive from Guildford into Perth, and it is worth while leaving the train for its enjoyment. Several delightful glimpses of the capital and the river are obtained as you make for the city. The Swan in some of its choicest views and aspects rivals the beauty of the Hawkesbury of New South Wales, or the Derwent and Tamar of Tasmania. The citizens of Perth, as in duty bound, insist that their river, as seen from the bluff over the Fremantle road, surpasses even the far-famed Sydney Harbour in all-round scenic reputation. But there are no Sydney people present on such occasions. The Swan, however, deserves the loyal praise of the Perth



## EN ROUTE FOR COOLGARDIE

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people, for without the superb situation which it provides for the little capital, Albany's chances of becoming the metropolis of "W. A." would wear a more sanguine hopefulness. The city stands on a peninsula running out into the river, and rises gradually to an elevation of a hundred feet or so to where the Catholic cathedral, as the city's most conspicuous landmark, overlooks both town and river. Fairy-like islands with timbered shores, and the broadening sweep of the river, as it rolls away towards Freemantle, make up a most picturesque and pleasing picture indeed of water and woodland landscape.

To ensure full justice being done to Perth you must first visit the goldfields, and make your stay in the city afterwards. This course will incline you to think that Westralia's capital is the most beautiful and healthy and captivating city in the world. I will, therefore, reserve my observations upon the rapidly-growing town until I have taken my readers with me to and from Coolgardie and Hannans.

The railway only ran as far as Barrabin (a fifteen hours' drive by coach short of Coolgardie) at the time of my visit. It has since been extended beyond Coolgardie, as far as Hannans; and coaching experience, with its bush "hotels" and gunyah "taverns" and alfresco "restaurants," are now things of the past. The traveller need not mourn at this. What he may have lost in the element of novelty he gains in the matter of solid comfort, with freedom from dust, flies, stench, thirst, and many other afflictions not nameable even in touring sketches.

The country from Perth to Northam is mostly of the wild bush kind, with here and there a cleared area, showing that the soil, when relieved of its gums and scrub and near some water, is capable of a high degree of cultivation. The land around Northam is of an excellent farming sort, on which wheat, fruit, and almost anything eatable will grow. Northam is a thriving town, undisturbed by any local gold mine fever; showing, in comfortable-looking houses, tastily-laid-out gardens, good shops, and flourishing banks, that agricultural pursuits have their solid rewards in "W. A." as well as in gold seeking. From here on to Southern Cross the bush in all its oppressive monotony and silence is with you. Never a chirp of a bird is heard. There being neither grass nor water, birds will not live in such a desert. Yet you see trees of the gum kind everywhere, and you wonder how they can possibly find nourishment out of such a seemingly sapless soil. The one

and only redeeming feature of the country you pass through is its countless variegated lovely wild flowers, and much, indeed, can and must be forgiven the otherwise most repellent-looking region that can attract and nourish these beautiful little floral vagrants of the "bush" world.

You find it difficult to believe on "doing" Southern Cross that such a place had focussed upon it the attention of the gold gambling world only a few brief years ago. It looked to me like a gold-mining graveyard, out of which all the ore bodies that had ever been buried there had been "snatched." A more desolate-looking, God-forsaken place could not well be imagined. And the mockery of the stellar names that had been given to the streets of the "Golden City"! These could still be read on the corners as you sauntered through "Pleiades Square," "Constellation Street," and the other sky-named places where "lots" had been bought and sold at booming prices only a brief time before. Now nothing remains but the remnants of timber-built stores, canvas offices, corrugated-iron "hotels" and "restaurants."

All went swimmingly with Southern Cross so long as it remained the forwarding place for the richer mines ahead, at Coolgardie and Hannans. As terminus of the line from Perth, it was the starting-place for the coaching and hauling transit onwards, and was in consequence a busy centre of trade with all the Yilgarn and Coolgardie goldfields. But when the line, too, went forward the life went out of the place, and its once widely-boomed "Central" and "Central Extended," its "Frazers" and "Frazer's South" mines had the duty thrown upon them of keeping the "Golden City" up to the standard of its town-lot owners' expectations.

These mines were being well worked at the time of my visit, and were giving employment to a few hundred miners, who peopled the only inhabited section of the deserted "City." The mines were, I believe, very little more than this. They probably pay the working expenses yet, and encourage the hope that deeper sinking may brighten a not too cheery future prospect.

No wonder the typhoid fiend held high jinks in and around "Pleiades Square"! The main water supply of Southern Cross was from a saline lagoon below the level of the "City," which answered the treble purpose of a burying-ground, a temporary navvies' camp, and water storage in rainy seasons! Water was pumped from this place, condensed, and sold at so much per gallon to those who could think of nothing but gold, until Death came and pegged out the most precious of all claims, which no

one could price or "jump." I was told of seventeen young miners from New Zealand who were stricken with typhoid at one of these Yilgarn camps. One only of the number emerged from the shanty hospital alive.

The whole journey from Perth to Coolgardie can now be made in one day by rail. It took me three days, and yet I was told on reaching the end of my three hundred and sixty miles' ride by rail and coach that it was quite a pleasant trip then when compared with the hardships of two years previously. On hearing this I was inclined to offer up a prayer in thanksgiving for not having travelled over the route in that pre-civilized period. What with the everlasting dust that enters every crevice of your clothes, your eyes, mouth, and nose, even under your watchcase; the most persistent and pugnacious flies in creation, "bush" hotels by night, a scorching sun, and a seat on a crazy coach by day, that crossing of the desert bush from Perth to Coolgardie made up about as rough a piece of travel as I have ever had in a somewhat varied experience of touring in many parts of the world.

## CHAPTER III.

### OPPOSING VIEWS ON THE COOLGARDIE GOLDFIELDS

THERE are two extreme and opposing opinions held about the Westralian goldfields: one, that they are, in richness and extent, "the greatest in the world"; the other, asserting that there is ninety per cent. of booming, as against ten of real gold-producing, value in all the mines so far opened up and operated. Truth, as in so many more instances, lies between the two views. There is no testimony needed to prove that gold is found over the large areas now known as the Yilgarn, Coolgardie, Dundas, Murchison, Ashburton, Pilbarra, and Kimberley districts. That has been established beyond all possibility of doubt; the only disputed point being, to what extent gold-bearing stone of a paying quality is likely to be found in these regions. My journey lay only over the chief parts of the best prospected of these districts, the Coolgardie-Hannans field, and no one with a pair of observant eyes, and the most elementary knowledge of mineralogy in his head, can travel through this country without being convinced of its rich auriferous nature.

In forming a judgment upon the goldfields of Westralia, some account must be taken of the mineral character and reputation of the island continent, of which it forms nearly a third part in territorial extent. The richest gold mines yet discovered have been worked in Victoria, while New South Wales and Queensland also possess valuable mining centres. South Australia, Westralia's next door neighbour, has not done as much in gold as in copper mines, but the yellow metal has been discovered in many parts of the colony all the same. The Northern Territory, which forms part of South Australia, has not yet been fully explored, not to speak of being adequately prospected, for gold; but there are gold mines operated there by Chinese and other Asiatic fossickers. Starting therefore at, say, York peninsula, on the extreme north of Queensland, and drawing a line round the coast, an average of a hundred miles or so inland; passing through the known mines of Queensland, New South Wales





## THE COOLGARDIE GOLDFIELDS 11

Victoria, South Australia, Westralia, and through the northern part of the Northern Territory of South Australia, on to the Gulf of Carpentaria; you travel over what, without much exaggeration, can be called a continuous belt of a gold-bearing formation round the whole Austral continent. The latest effort to open up this belt of golden reefs may or may not yield as rich rewards as do the labours of the gold hunters in Victoria, or the rich mines of Charters Towers, Mount Morgan, or Gympie in Queensland; but that there is in Westralia a far wider auriferous area, in which gold reefs have been found, than in any of the other colonies, with the possible exception of Queensland, needs no proving now. The only thing wanting proof is the depth or extent of the gold-producing reefs within this area, on faith in the value of which a money-gambling world has staked near one hundred million pounds in investments.

The mines on the Coolgardie fields, extending over 10,000 square miles, which include the Hannans, Wealth of Nations, Londonderry and other famous groups, with countless smaller properties, have been financially operated in London on a principle which may be made more or less plain to the reader by an illustration. Take, say, Whiteley's, the Army and Navy Stores, Maple's, and Lipton's City Road concern; establishments stretching across a great portion of London. Between these flourishing firms there are numberless small shops, carrying on somewhat similar businesses to those of their gigantic rivals. The source of all their profitable dealings is the same—the needs and luxuries of the people. Supposing, then, you have all the intermediate stores or establishments of all sizes attempting to form themselves into companies, not so much on the merits of their merchandise or custom, as on the ground that they are in the shadow of Westbourne Grove, or in the proximity of Victoria Street, or near to Tottenham Court Road, or adjacent to the City Road headquarters of the world-famed provision enterprise—you can form some idea of what has been done by the enterprising London company promoter in the case of the minor properties of the Coolgardie goldfield. The analogy is, possibly, not on all fours with the case of the countless companies that have been formed out of topographical relationship with neighbouring rich mines, but it will help, at any rate, to illustrate the system which, together with unprincipled booming by managers on the fields, have heavily handicapped the reputation of the whole of the Coolgardie gold mining region.

Out of some one hundred millions of capital that have been invested in Westralian mines, probably half went in the wildest kind of speculation. Properties which, as little shops, might do a fair business in their own neighbourhood, but could not command the turnover of the Army and Navy Stores, were held up as probable rivals of the nearest big concern. "The reef runs in the same direction as the Giant Nugget. No. 1 shaft has been sunk to a level of 100 feet, with most promising prospects. A cross-cut to the north-west has brought to light a new strike that will carry very rich stone. The winze of the 80 feet level is now down 30 feet in solid quartz. The drive is being taken along the hanging wall, and visible gold can be seen. Stone to keep twenty stampers going will soon be obtainable, and it promises to carry from four to fifteen ounces to the ton. This property will be one of the richest on the gold fields." I saw several of the properties that had been boomed and sold on this stereotyped report-cabling plan in London, and their intrinsic value would be fairly measured by the comparison of one of the small shops of my illustration. There was the most wilful and scandalous exaggeration at both ends of the line; managers, "experts," and interested parties magnifying every speck of gold ore into a huge nugget, and every yard of ground between the claim and the nearest mine with a *bonâ fide* fame described as of the richest of reefs. I examined one of these concerns closely. It had been financed in London for £150,000. About £3000 had been expended on the whole property—shaft-sinking, driving, labour, and machinery. Its reputation arose from some rich alluvial finds near where the shaft went down, and from the fact of its being within three hundred yards of the famous Somebody's Reward. It employed a "manager" and about ten men, and not as much gold as would pay for their labour had been produced up to the time I went through the place.

I have come to the conclusion since returning home, and making myself acquainted with the system of floating mining properties which is universal here in London, that these are the kind of mines which have most attraction for the professional company promoter. They are bought cheap from the original owner. "Experts'" glowing accounts are paid for relatively higher. The tabulated yield of the big mines in the locality and the market price of their shares are given in the prospectus, and the mine is thus sold to the speculating public. Seventy per cent. of the capital, say, would be subscribed. Out of this, five thousand would cover original purchase; ten thousand would go

for the stereotyped expenses of launching; twenty to the underwriters; fifty for the promoters, and the balance for the working of the mine. Against such successful and fairly-handled properties as the Great Boulder, for instance, place fifty such as that I refer to, and it will be understood where so large a proportion of the invested one hundred millions have gone, and why the Coolgardie district has not realized the glowing predictions of voracious "experts" and the share-catching promises of voracious promoters.

Then, there has been the over-capitalising of many of the fairly valuable mines and the thrusting of unsuitable machinery on the working of others by ignorant direction from London. All this, and more of the kind, must, in justice to the Coolgardie fields, be remembered when their reputation is being considered. They have not yet had a fair chance, in my humble judgment, but when that treatment is extended to them, it will in my belief be found that they will falsify the adverse judgments of most critics, if they do not fully realize all the sanguine predictions of others.

Whether these fields are rich enough in the extent and value of their gold deposits to build up and maintain similar permanent mining centres to those of Ballarat and Bendigo, is a matter upon which time must alone authoritatively decide. Developments so far made can scarcely be taken as a fair index. It has to be admitted, however, that many of the mines which created the Coolgardie rush have followed the fate of those which led to the previous boom of Southern Cross, and have tended also to pinch out in the working. The Londonderry is the most conspicuous case for those who have held from the beginning that these fields were of the "pocket" and pinching-out character. Still, all this adverse opinion has to be duly weighed along with the facts advanced by the optimists. It is urged, and with reason, that the Bayley's, and even the Londonderry, mine would have been fairly good properties for shareholders had there been less of the wild-cat spirit displayed in floating them in London for six or seven hundred thousand each. A mining property may be good or bad from two points of view. Those who sold Bayley's Reward for £600,000 had a good thing for themselves. The public who were induced to give that sum for it, purchased a bargain not near so good. This makes almost all the difference. Bayley's, or the Londonderry, if sold for seventy or one hundred thousand, would probably be paying dividends to-day. In this respect the Great Boulder, Lake View, and Hannan's Brown Hill



were more fortunate in the floating. Among their other merits they are not handicapped with a crushing load of promoters' unconscionable profits.

It must also in fairness be borne in mind that the real development of the Coolgardie fields cannot be said to have commenced before the completion of the railway from Perth to Hannans. What was done previously was more for the ends of company promoters in London than for the real working of reefs in Westralia. The mines on the route of this line, or near to it, are now, however, being put on their mettle by the existence of the railway, and their worth as working concerns must soon be determined. It is true the water difficulty still remains, but not to an extent which can be honestly pleaded now as an excuse for the backward records of mines for which big promises were made and big sums obtained in London. Deep sinking has tapped more water, if not more gold, and while the Government scheme for bringing an abundant supply of drinking water from some of the rivers near Perth is a right and courageous and a necessary undertaking for the general health and benefit of the goldfields, the gold-producing reputation of the mines sold in London during the past three years no longer depends upon the fortunes of this much-debated water scheme. Long before the river sources of the coastal ranges can be tapped and water carried up to Mount Burgess, the facilities afforded by the opening up of the railway to Hannans must test the real character and approximate worth of the whole Coolgardie mining properties in which the British and continental investors have embarked their one hundred millions of capital.



## CHAPTER IV.

### LONDONDERRY AND HANNANS

A DRIVE from Coolgardie to the "Londonderry" had very little of the inconveniences, at the time of my visit, which must have been a trouble to traffic of all kinds in the now "distant" days of a year previously. One or two years in the history of mines, which don't succeed, change things considerably, especially to shareholders, and the "Londonderry," like some young spendthrift, went through its sensational career in a brief space of time indeed. The track for the ten or twelve miles of a road is very good for West Australia, and not uninteresting. The "bush" is with you all the way, of course, but not so dense, or dull looking, as on the journey up from Barrabin to Coolgardie. Almost every yard of the distance has been prospected, and holes—I beg pardon, "mines" innumerable are met at every turn. We passed by several "camps" where a few men were trying, once more, to unearth a reef, or anything that could give a promise of "a find." When not too far away from a centre of some population, a "camp" life is not in any way a hard one. The tent is, at least, as cool to sleep in as a corrugated iron dwelling. Food is cooked in the alfresco kitchen, and the stenches, and flies, and typhoid-laden air of an unsanitary mining town are all absent. The normal healthfulness of the dry atmosphere makes sleeping outside the tent, in the hot season, a perfectly safe expedient for catching the refreshing coolness of the night.

On my way I stopped to peep at the "Iron Duke," which was in full mining swing, the stone looking (to my no-expert eyes) as "promising." I found the "Londonderry" very disappointing. Compared with the working and machinery at "Bayley's Reward," the Lord Fingall concern appeared a very small show. I counted about a dozen miners on the surface, but did not ask for the number labouring below. On the occasion of a second visit to the mine I had a talk with the foreman, who informed me they

had about fifty men employed altogether. He told me they had found some stone, a few weeks previously, which yielded 1200 ounces for two and a half tons of quartz. They had had enough of booming at the "Londonderry," and did not intend making any fuss about such lucky yields as the one alluded to. Such stone was not, however, a rare experience, I was assured. They came across pockets of the kind much more frequently than it was supposed by those not in the know. The famous "gold hole" is about a hundred feet away from the shaft of the mine, and looks more like a place that had been dug for a deposit than for a find of the yellow metal. It is supposed that the original discoverers of this spot took £25,000 worth of the gold out before selling their luck to others. Two small hotels and about thirty dwellings at Londonderry are a standing proof of the faith which their owners possess in the reviving fortunes of the once world-famed mine. Men working at the mine (knowing I had no commission or interest beyond curiosity) assured me that "the place would come out all right yet."

I went down "Bayley's Reward," which brought the rush from Southern Cross to Coolgardie. It is situated about half a mile outside the town which it created, and had, when I was there, a healthy, active look. There were about 150 men at work all round, who earned an average of £3 10s. per week and a gallon of water per day. Captain Mathews, the manager, took me down the shaft, which had then reached a depth of 500 feet. I saw the reef being mined, and though no gold was perceptible to the naked eye, I was assured that the stone yielded an ounce to the ton. This mine was sold in London for £700,000.

The distance to Hannans (Kalgoorlie) from Coolgardie is a two or three hours' drive over the very worst track for dust and flies I had yet experienced since leaving Perth. So thick were the clouds of it on the route that I failed to recognize Bishop Gibney, who hailed us as we passed him on the way for a pull at our water-bag. The copper colour of the dust along with its fineness coats the traveller's face and clothes as if it had been laid on with a brush, and obliterates all recognizable features in a short time. The sturdy Bishop is one of the bravest teetotalers in the world. The water of the goldfields would frighten an ordinary abstainer, but not Dr. Gibney. I have seen him stalk into the bar of an hotel in his six foot of courage and consistency and ask for a glass of water and drink it standing there, as a moral protest against the whisky and soda epidemic which invariably prevails at mining-camp hotels. But there are few men



anywhere as brave as "the Bush Bishop," as he is called in Western Australia, and about whose work for the wretched Aborigines I shall have something to say later on.

Hannans as a town is a repetition, in a way, of Coolgardie, or, rather, was at the time of my visit; for both have changed for the better in buildings and accommodation since then. The first incident which arrested my attention on "doing" this now leading goldfield of the colony, was a public sale of condensed water. The fluid was disposed of at the rate of sixpence per gallon. The "Great Boulder" is two or three miles from Hannans. You pass "Hannan's Brown Hill," "the Ivanhoe," and other famous mines on the way. The "Great Boulder" attracted me most for its then rising reputation, and no one could see the mine without noting, "with half an eye," that there, at least, was a concern that was not over-boomed. The hill which constitutes the visible part of the property is conical in form, rising up a couple of hundred feet from where the "Lake View," its rich neighbour, is situated. The country all round—excepting in the direction of the "Lake"—is made up of a series of small hills or mounds, but of a lesser elevation than that on which the "Boulder" property lies. All these hills are now occupied by mines. Heaps of rich stone, some of it showing visible gold, were being accumulated around the shafts of the "Boulder" and "Lake View"—separated only by a narrow gully—and the stampers seemed unequal to the task of keeping pace with the steady output of rich ore. No one seemed to care about the safe-keeping of this ore. It lay round in huge quantities without protection. But a notice in large letters was posted up at the "Lake View" warning employees against *taking water without leave!* Here, at least, water required more watching than gold.

Nearest the "Great Boulder" and "Lake View" there were the "Hainault," the "Ivanhoe," "Kalgoorlie," and some other properties whose names I did not record in my note-book. Further away, towards Hannans, on my return journey, I passed the "Croesus," "Boulder Central," and "Brown Hill." I stopped at this mine, as its reputation was higher at the time than that of the "Great Boulder." The stone which lay round, thousands of tons of it, looked even richer than that of the "Boulder"—to my eyes—but there was some unaccountable confusion in the management and working of the property which appeared to handicap it very much. Everything around the mine looked healthy, except the working of it, and I was told that this was largely due to the constant

interference of ignorant London direction. This mine, like the "Great Boulder," has had a fair show in the start. It was sold for £70,000, and has not, therefore, a big capitalized incubus to carry on its back.

Continuing the route back to Hannans, scores of properties are passed, all supposed to be first or second cousins to the leading successful mines. One of these had been very much boomed as a coming prize. There appeared very little of a prize about it. There was a large-sized hole, but no regular shaft on the property, and the concern looked anything but what it was represented in the Press to be. It is, of course, possible that a closer inspection would have shown it in a better light. It appeared to me, however, to be just on a par with hundreds of properties I had seen since leaving Southern Cross, which had yielded a ton of booming for every ounce of genuine gold. "Hannan's Reward" overlooks the town called after the discoverer of this mine. Hannans, or Kalgoorlie as it is now called, is built on the lower slopes of foothills on which alluvial gold was found in large quantities at the time of the rush from Coolgardie. This alluvial find was the work of three old Irishmen—Hannan, Shea, and Flanagan. The finding of alluvial gold always acts as a scent to a reef formation, and the discovery of the "Boulder" and its successful neighbours followed the lucky prospecting of the three men referred to. Hannan must have husbanded his reward badly, as he is now, I believe, in impoverished circumstances. Kalgoorlie is at present a railway terminus, and, being nearer the richest mines in Westralia than its rival Coolgardie, is destined to be the most prosperous of all the mining camps of the colony.





## CHAPTER V.

### COOLGARDIE POLITICS

IT was an interesting period in the life of Coolgardie for a visit. The new goldfields had emerged out of the final stage of mining camp evolution, from the Vigilance Committee life, to that of recognized law and order. The rush and boom set going by Bayley's rich find, beyond "Fly Shoot Flat," and the subsequent discovery of the Londonderry, had been carried on to where Paddy Hannan had given his name to a district which promised to eclipse the richest mines yet found in Westralia. Everybody seemed to have plenty of money. Somers's hotel was crowded with agents of London, Adelaide, and Melbourne syndicates, experts, mine managers, and fortunate and other prospectors. A fire, which had burned down the chief part of Bayley Street, was talked of as a mere incident in the exciting life of "the bonanza city." Typhoid was prevalent, it is true, but that also was only a matter of trivial concern to men who had come thousands of miles in search of a mine or a fortune. Everybody, from the storekeeper in the street to the man about to start with half a dozen properties for sale in London, was priding himself upon being on a field which he believed, or said he did, would rival Ballarat in the wealth and permanency of its gold deposits. No miner was idle, unless he wished it. Work was plentiful, at a pound a day, and a significant effect of this absence of poverty and idleness was seen in a crimeless town, numbering five or six thousand men, engaged in gold hunting. Warder Finerty had an empty lock-up, and nothing to engage his magisterial activity beyond the more congenial duties of selling government lots and issuing miners' certificates.

The best place in which to study the social side of so interesting a community was inside the Coolgardie Club. Here you met all kinds and conditions of men, full of the gold-seeking fever. On one occasion I found myself one of a group which comprised an American general, an ex-British consul, graduates

of Trinity College, Dublin, and of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, doctors, barristers, lawyers, and journalists; with some politicians from Great Britain and the sister colonies. Similar groups are, it is true, common to goldfield life, but they are not on that account the less interesting as a study of human character under conditions and influences which tend to make a man, endowed with inherited or acquired conservative instincts and opinions, as radical as the most disaffected worker against all the legal or political impediments which appear to stand in the way of the individualist claims of the gold-hunter. All Coolgardie, but particularly its Club, was seething with discontent at this time against "the Perth Nobodies," as the Government of the colony was contemptuously designated. The telegraph service was muddled by mismanagement, the railway was not being pushed forward with sufficient rapidity, the all-important water question appeared to be beyond the meagre capacity of Perth to grapple with, the franchise was denied the goldfields because the politicians on the Swan River dreaded the infusion of brains and radical mining views into the public life of the colony. Everything in fact which afflicted the fields, from the prevalence of typhoid to the fire in Bayley Street, was fathered religiously, or profanely rather, upon the neglect or incapacity of the unfortunate government. And the glaring ingratitude of it all! Did not the goldfields and their rapidly-increasing population supply the public treasury at Perth with the whole of its growing surplus? Were the men who risked health and life in fighting the dangers of the bush and climate, for the benefit of the colony, to see the wants of the goldfields neglected while the goldfields' revenue went to furnish impossible breakwaters for Fremantle and bounties for the bumpkins of Bunbury? Not without a struggle, was the unanimous resolve of the Coolgardie Club. Therefore was it that a proof of a constitution for a "Goldfields National League" was submitted for my opinion while enjoying the hospitality of its organizers. This document declared the objects of the organization to be: "To obtain the establishment of an office for the registration of voters in connection with every Mining Registry Office; that a miner's right should be sufficient qualification to entitle the holder to have his name inserted in the electoral roll of the district in which he was resident; to obtain Parliamentary representation on a basis of population; to obtain an alteration in the existing freights on the goldfields railways, so as to assimilate them to the charges obtaining on other state railways; to see that railway

construction connecting the goldfield centres should be carried on more expeditiously; to obtain necessary reforms in the postal and telegraph departments; to see that the interests of the goldfields were not subordinated to those of seaboard and agricultural districts; and, finally, to see that a fair proportion of the surplus revenue should be expended on those public works necessary for the development of the goldfields of the colony, especially on the conservation of water." This was the constitutional platform of the League, but it was openly declared in the Club that if these demands were not conceded without delay, ten thousand miners might feel inclined some day to march to Perth and, by physical force, wrest from the politicians of the capital the right to govern the goldfields. "Chamberlain was in office, and the influence which the mine owners and miners could exert through the investing capitalists of London would secure a Home Rule Constitution for a separate goldfields colony."

These were the views of the bolder spirits among the company, and I failed not to feel duly flattered when it was suggested by a man who had taken honours at Cambridge that my experience as a one-time Fenian and Land League Organizer would enable me, if willing, to help the goldfields to achieve Home Rule! I felt compelled to put the temptation gently aside and, for once in my life, to act the part of a conservative, influenced possibly by the knowledge (but badly concealed by my argonaut revolutionary friends) that they were by no means in favour of Irish Home Rule, but actuated solely by those gold-hunting principles which can justify raids to grab Rands in South Africa, or plans to upset a Home Rule authority at Perth. Less warlike counsels prevailed in the end at Coolgardie. A little journalistic filibustering was resorted to in Perth. It was duly circulated that fifty thousand pounds were to be got from London, with which to start a goldfields daily paper at the seat of Government; a junction of political forces between the twenty thousand of a mining population on the fields and the working men of Perth, Fremantle, and Guildford would follow, and the reign of the "Seven Families" and their pocket borough Legislature would, in due course, be ended by sheer numerical strength in a general election. I helped to promulgate this more feasible plan of campaign on my return to Perth, and not without some satisfactory results, I think. The Premier hastened up to the goldfields, got a hostile reception at Coolgardie, and unfolded a generous programme of ministerial promises, some of which have been carried out, and more are possible of execution. Anyhow, the

goldfields "Home Rulers" have not, I believe, yet petitioned Mr. Chamberlain for a Coolgardie Home Rule constitution. They have had the franchise extended to them, however, and at the general election which has recently occurred in the colony a "Goldfields Party" of six or seven members was returned, and revolutionary projects may be said to have safely subsided, at any rate inside the plans and counsels of the new party.

The most venturesome of the prospectors on the goldfields were of the Irish race, and some of the most fortunate also. So were some of the organizers of the Goldfields National League. I was told that fully one-third of the mining population of the colony belonged to the same stock. There was no trace of racial or political feeling among the mixed communities engaged in the same pursuit. The best of good fellowship obtained everywhere, and so exemplary were the miners in their treatment of each other's property and rights, that no more than two or three "roll ups" were needed from the beginning to deal with dishonest characters. Coolgardie and Hannans have, in all these respects, unique records in the history of goldfields. So also have, I believe, the other Westralian camps which I did not visit. A woman could walk in the streets of these towns after dark with less fear of being molested than in Regent Street, London. As illustrating the tendency of the Celt to gravitate towards public life, wherever he finds himself on a footing of political equality with others of the English-speaking races, it was interesting to me to find the first Warden, the first Mayor, and the first Coolgardie member of the Legislature belonging to the Irish race!



## CHAPTER VI.

### IMPRESSIONS OF PERTH

**P**ERTH looks best at a short distance from where its picturesque situation and admirable setting in the framework formed by the curving of the Swan river can be admired. A closer view reveals much poverty of taste in both the plans and the architecture of the little capital. As in the case of Hobart (Tasmania), which Perth resembles in these respects, it must in fairness be pleaded that a colony having less people than any one of a dozen Lancashire towns, cannot be expected to shine resplendent in the matter of handsome and costly edifices for its metropolis. Seven years ago Perth had only a population of some ten thousand people; to-day there are probably double this number, owing to the influx of miners and others to the gold-fields, the discovery of which has contributed very much to the prosperity of the colony's capital. Hay Street, by no means an attractive-looking thoroughfare, is the chief business portion of the town, and is inexcusably narrow. In fact, one would think, on walking through Perth, that the land in this colony was as limited as in the principality of Monaco, so little was there allowed of it in the original planning of the streets. This may be due to that blessed ground-rent law, so beloved of the Anglo-Saxon race, which makes everything else subordinate to its rights and operations.

In the matter of sanitation, Perth is the most backward of all the Australian cities, though admirably adapted by situation for drainage purposes. This fact, together with the extreme summer heat, must make it an undesirable place to live in during the warm season. The temperature in the hot months averages over one hundred degrees in the shade, and is as high as seventy in yearly average. The city has had an unenviable record in typhoid fevers, owing to the indifference or neglect of its municipal authorities of proper sanitary provisions. Now, however, that it is growing so rapidly in wealth and in population

this evil will soon be remedied by an efficient drainage system, when Perth should become, in conjunction with its attractive suburbs, a pleasant and healthy urban centre.

St. George's Terrace is "the Park Row" of Perth, and has not been so stinted in elbow-room as Hay Street. There are many very pretty houses to be seen in this part of the city in neatly ornamented grounds, with a good supply of trees for show and shade. Mount's Bay Road provides a charming drive and an agreeable promenade for the people, with the Swan river running alongside, showing some very pleasing vistas across the widening stream, and handsome wooded banks and bluffs as a background. Excepting the Catholic cathedral, which is the reverse of handsome, and the Town Hall, which was built by convict labour, there is no conspicuous building in the city. The Governor's dwelling and the other substantial residences in the town and suburbs show comfort rather than beauty in appearance, an arrangement which may possibly offer the compensating balance of good sense as a set-off against indifference or bad taste as to design.



## CHAPTER VII.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIAN "PARTIES"

THE Legislature of the colony (if my memory does not fail me) is wedged in between a store of some kind, and the Town Hall. It was found necessary, it appears, to have "Legislative Assembly" painted on the door of the popular chamber, lest some citizen, in search of candles or soap, might by mistake enter the wrong door in Hay Street. The Assembly itself is a room like that of a London Vestry, large enough to hold its thirty-five or forty law makers. I had not the advantage of seeing either House in session during my stay in Perth, and cannot, therefore, record any impressions of the Westralian Parliament. But judging from speeches which I read in the papers, and from the converse I was fortunate enough to have with several members, I would conclude that the Westralian representative was a good average public speaker, full to overflowing with the subject—climatic, commercial, constitutional, and all the rest—of "the coming colony" of Western Australia.

The Upper Chamber in the Perth Legislature is now elective, and follows, in this respect, the democratic constitution of South Australia and Victoria. The qualifications for elected and electors for both Houses are mainly those of property holding. It was to me interesting to find that any person convicted in any part of the empire of "treason" could not sit as a member of either Upper or Lower Chamber—an arrangement with which I would have no personal quarrel had it even been borrowed from an older and somewhat more important legislature. It may be noted, in passing, with reference to this ultra-loyalist provision against the possible incursion of Irish ex-prisoners, that on the Select Committee of the House of Commons, which considered the bill for conferring Home Rule on Western Australia in 1890, there was an ex-Fenian, who fought hard to make the constitu-



tion for the young colony as radical as possible—Mr. James O'Kelly, M.P.

This is the only colony in Australasia in which payment of members does not obtain.\* The property-owning influence has so far been too powerful and reactionary to follow the sister colonies in this as on other progressive lines. When a Crown colony, its Legislative Council was run by "the Seven Families," and you will be told in the country to-day that even now anything in Westralia that is not theirs, or under their influence, is not worth the having. These governing families are the Forrests, Burts, Leakes, Shentons, Steers, Stones, and Lefroys. Looking over the list of the first colonists who came by the *Parmelia* in June, 1829, I fail to find any of these names. That, however, does not call for much comment. The fortunate "seven" may possibly have done more than others in the development, such as it is, of the colony to earn to some extent the power which they are said to wield in its affairs to-day. The brothers Forrest have certainly established conspicuous claims to possess a share in the rule of their native country. They were born in Bunbury of an artisan family, and have been identified in many meritorious ways with the opening up of the country. They surveyed and prospected an immense area of it when the carrying out of such tasks incurred considerable risks to health and life, and it is, therefore, in keeping with a certain fitness of things political to find Sir John Forrest the first and present Premier of his native land.

There are as yet no "Parties," properly speaking, in the Westralian Parliament. There is scarcely even an organized opposition to the Forrest Ministry. Capitalism rules the roost so far, but now that there is a large increase of population contributed from Europe and the neighbouring colonies to the gold-fields of the province, new blood will be infused into the somewhat stagnant public life of the country, and the democratic spirit, which rules well and wisely on progressive principles in many of the other colonies, will soon be heard of in Westralia. As a result of the recent general election a "Goldfields Party" of six or eight members has been introduced into the legislature. This may lay the foundation for a progressive or Democratic opposition to the ruling Conservatism of the colony.

Western Australia is the youngest of the Australian Home-

\* Since the above was written the Perth Parliament has adopted payment of members.





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ruled colonies. The bill to grant a constitution to the province received the royal assent on the 15th of August, 1890. The measure was not passed without encountering some opposition in the Select Committee. It was felt by some of the members that it was a "tall order" for a community numbering then only 45,000 people, to demand the ownership and control of a Crown territory having an area almost as large as that of Europe, with Russia left out. And, no matter how much one may be influenced by a desire to see the Home Rule principle extended throughout the British empire, in the place of Downing Street centralization, it does look an astounding inconsistency on the part of the Imperial Legislature, after denying in 1886 a cribb'd, cabined, and confined self-governing constitution to five millions of people in Ireland, to grant the freest possible Home Rule (with power to tax British products in the bargain) to a population about equal to that of the city of Limerick, having only some fifty years' tenure of a country just thirty times the area and extent of Ireland! Turning over to a handful of emigrants, a country 1500 miles long and 800 wide, with a coast line of 3000 miles, and possessing an estimated acreage of 678,400,000—a national estate of 15,000 acres for every man, woman, and child of the 45,000 inhabitants! All this, too, fourteen thousand miles away, and refusing limited self-governing powers to the Irish people at England's own doors (with all England's supporters secured in the possession of everything worth having) does seem as illogical, irrational, and contradictory a policy as could well emanate from a parliamentary debating society in Colney Hatch. But it is the Imperial statesmanship of England all the same.

These most fortunate emigrants are not as disinterested in the matter of English trade and commerce as they are liberal in loyal sentiments and feelings, on which, by the way, there are no Imperial stamp duties levied. The daughter colonies of Great Britain are devoted and true to "Home," as the old countries are called at the antipodes, but they make "Home" pay all the same for the privilege of trading with their distant relations. In 1892 the colony of Westralia with its handful of people reaped no less a sum than £270,000 in customs duties upon the total imports for that year, amounting to a little over a million and a quarter in value. Among the articles on which duties are levied for the revenue of the colony, almost all the necessaries of life for an industrial community are included—salt, sugar, soap, candles, oatmeal, rice, maize, cheese, confectionery, flour, and fruit,

with iron and steel wire, galvanized and corrugated iron, and almost everything needed in the equipment of the dwellings of the people, though only a very few of these things are produced or manufactured in the colony. In 1894 the revenue of this colony was over £11 per head of a population which had increased by one-third since 1890; that is, twice the amount per head of revenue in Victoria, and thirty or forty per cent. higher than in any of the other colonies. The property owners who rule the country know how to make "Home" exporters and Westralian industrial producers pay the piper in exchange for the loyalist sentiments so disinterestedly proclaimed on all needful occasions.

There are no Labour members in the Perth Parliament. The Trades bodies of the colony are numerically weak owing to the limited population, though the large number of people who took part in an Eight Hours demonstration in Perth, which was held during my stay in the city, showed the potential forces of a comparatively powerful Labour movement whenever its organization may be effectively taken in hand. Home Rule has only existed a few years in the colony, and this fact gives another explanation why no direct representatives of the working classes are yet found in the Assembly. It was significant of the want of confidence in both the ministry and the members of the Legislature, on the part of the trades of Perth, Fremantle, and Guildford, that no member of either House, or of the Forrest government, was asked to take part in the Labour-day festivities on the occasion referred to.

Weak politically and in organized strength as the workers of Perth and Fremantle are, they show a practical wisdom in the carrying out of their demonstrations, which is badly wanted in connection with similar occasions in Great Britain and Ireland. Here everything is subordinated to processions and oratory. Someone has described a Hyde Park Labour meeting as an affair of "flags and flatulency." They do these things better in Perth. Athletic sports, tree-cutting contests, racing, and kindred attractions are associated with their annual muster in honour of the Eight Hours principle. Seven hundred pounds were taken as gate money on one of these occasions. Speech-making converts nobody nowadays, either in Parliament or on the platform. The newspaper and the leaflet propagate political opinions and minister to party conviction. People go to meetings either to endorse previously adopted views on public issues or to satisfy curiosity to hear them expressed; sometimes to



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oppose opinions contrary to their own. Nobody goes there to learn anything. A judicious admixture of sport with walking and talking at annual Labour gatherings in the old countries, would probably tend to turn what is passively inimical to the Labour movement in Great Britain into a possible auxiliary, as has, to some extent, been done in other Australian cities besides Perth.

The workers of this colony are not as "advanced" in their principles as those of the more populous sister colonies. Socialism, either of a moderate or an extreme kind, has few adherents among them. They are of the progressive Trades Unionist way of thinking, and build their platforms on the lines of those British Labour organizations which are constructed on individualist lines, but which demand legislative interference where unjust conditions of toil exist. Though refreshments were sold at the Perth Labour Gala Day, at which I had the pleasure of being present, I saw no one under the influence of drink among the eight or ten thousand people who attended. Like colonial workers generally, the artisans and labourers of Westralian towns live well, as their comparative high wages enable them to do. They are, like most of their fellow-colonists, good drinkers, but are not by any means the slaves of drink to the extent we find so large a proportion of people in parts of Great Britain and Ireland, where wages are fifty or sixty per cent. below the Australian level.

Fremantle has a pleasant and healthful situation and appearance. It is the chief port of the colony, and is also considered by its citizens to be its leading business and industrial centre. It is some twelve miles distant from Perth, and the drive between the two chief towns of the province is very enjoyable in all that goes to make up a delightful trip. A more pleasant way still of travelling from the capital to the seaport is by boat down the Swan river, at the mouth of which Fremantle stands. The river will average a mile in width all the way, and opens out here and there into lake-like expansions; forming, with the wooded coasts and picturesque headlands which are the most conspicuous features of the journey, a most enjoyable feast of eye-pleasing scenery.

With about a third of the present population of Perth, Fremantle has ten times the capital's ambition, and is a formidable rival of Albany's for the proud position of one day being the metropolis of a great, prosperous, and populous Westralia. There are many points in favour of this aspiration, with a few

obstacles that are not of an insurmountable nature. The approach to the harbour is not what it could be made to be, while the bar at the mouth of the Swan, now in process of removal, is a serious impediment to the shipping accommodation of the port. Granting the contention of the Fremantlians that these are removable difficulties, this dream of future growth and greatness does not look so utopian to an impartial observer as to a citizen of Perth. With the exception of Sydney, Australia's capital cities are not too favourably situated as to seaport advantages. Melbourne has communication, it is true, with Port Philip, and can berth at its wharves ships of two or three thousand tons; but it is, in the matter of distance from Europe, Africa, and India, nearly two thousand miles further away than Fremantle from the mails and markets of countries nearest in commercial ties to Australia. This is the fact which causes your Fremantle citizen to talk big when the future of the prison-built town is in question. Spend a few millions upon the harbour, extend the railway, now plying five hundred miles eastwards to Hannans, still further east to the boundary of South Australia—some six hundred more miles over gum and sandy plains—and then have the line carried on to the head of Spencer Gulf, so as to connect with the system which unites South Australia with the other three (continental) colonies, and the commercial fortune of Fremantle is only a matter of expansion by leaps and bounds. It would certainly bring South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland for traffic, passenger, and mail purposes, several days nearer to Europe, Africa, and India.

With all the known drawbacks of tropical climate in the north, "bush" deserts, scrub lands, and sandy regions elsewhere, there exist immense industrial possibilities in so vast a country, possessing, among other potential advantages, goldfields extending almost from Dundas to Kimberley, a distance of some 2000 miles. Developments must now proceed apace with increasing wealth and a revenue growing more rapidly still out of a prospering mining industry. A great part of the colony is well suited for agriculture, as is shown in the progress of centres like Northam, Bunbury, York, and other places. The soil along the southwest coast will grow all the common cereals, and is specially suited for fruit and vine culture; the climate and soil being most favourable for grape growing. Great tracts of the northern part of the country are well adapted for pasturage, as good grasses grow up Kimberley way, where, I was told by men who had



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lived there, a fair amount of water is also found. Wool growing is one of the leading industries.

The forest industry of this colony could be made of enormous commercial advantage to the country if it could be adequately developed. Jarrah wood is of an extraordinary hardness, and most suitable for paving, pile-driving, and various other building purposes. It is found over a vast portion of a forest-land area, said to be equal to the area of Great Britain. Other timbers of a less commercial value, peculiar to most of the colonies, are also found in great quantity within this enormous forest region.

The predominance of the gold industry in Western Australia has not altogether shut out from the view of its rulers the more permanent industry of the land. Experience shows that wherever suitable soil for cultivation is found near a goldfield, the unsuccessful seekers after the precious metal go on to the land and learn to strike food-growing resources where gold-bearing reefs did not provide fortunes for all. In fact, gold hunting has usually been an economic recruiting agency for land settlement. This will happen in Westralia as it has in Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, and steps are therefore being taken to encourage this movement on to land industry. Amendments of existing land laws were made in 1893-4, providing facilities for homestead selection, such as are in force in other colonies. In a recent publication by the Government of this colony, the following summary of the regulations and tenure of Crown lands is given :—

“ The Government has power to lease Crown lands at a rent of from 5s. to 20s. per 1000 acres in areas of not less than 3000, 20,000, or 50,000 acres. The rent and area depend on the division in which the lands are situate. But note that there is no limit to the maximum quantity that may be leased. Lessees in all the divisions except the south-west not having, within seven years after lease applied for in the division where the leased land lies, ten head of sheep or one head of large stock, or who shall not within that time have expended £5 in improvements for every 1000 acres lease, shall have to pay double the rent fixed. But the possession of the amount of stock maintained by a lessee in the Kimberley Division or in the western part of the Eucla Division will confer a right to a remission of one half the rent.

“ The farmer may, anywhere in the south-west, take up his selection—conditional purchase by deferred payment, as it is called. The payment is 10s., in twenty annual instalments. The conditions are residence on the selection for the first five years, fencing in the same time the whole of the land, and expending within ten years on the land in improvements 10s. an acre, in addition to the cost of exterior fencing. The conditions of residence may be dispensed with provided 20s. an acre be expended in improvements.”

Under the "Agricultural Bank Act of 1894" State money can be loaned as follows :—

"On easy conditions to farmers, for the purpose of helping them to cultivate and make improvements. The interest cannot exceed 6 per cent. per annum, a very low rate for Western Australia. The security, as already stated, consists of the improvements and cultivation, on which the money advanced is to be laid out on the land. The total money advanced must not be more than three-fourths of the fair estimated value of the improvements to be so made, and no loan for a sum greater than £800 can be made. All farmers may take advantage of the Bank if they require accommodation. The Agricultural Bank is easy to deal with."

Of the 670,000,000 acres comprising the vast territory of this colony, with their good, bad, and indifferent lands—and mines and forests, as well—probably no more than one-twelfth of the soil has been, as yet, alienated. This means that 600,000,000 acres of land (an area thirty times the extent of Ireland) is still the State property of Western Australia !



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE ABORIGINES.

**I**N Western Australia the Catholic Church has made some efforts to reclaim the Aborigines, and with a little success. Dr. Gibney, the bishop of Perth, lived for a short time among the natives in the Kimberley region and felt quite safe while with them. They have occasionally speared white men, but, as the bishop told me, "only when the white men had stolen their gins or otherwise grievously injured them." They go quite naked in the tropical parts of the colony, and Dr. Gibney speaks highly of the regard shown to the women by the unmarried men. He has frequently seen young men turn away on to another path when young women were on the track for water, and go to a detour so as not to meet them. In his report to the Aborigines' Protection Board of his visit in 1892 to the Kimberley natives, the bishop says:—

"Throughout this trip I had varied experiences of the native character. Almost invariably they approached us with their spears and other weapons, but when they saw our hands empty they stacked their spears and showed no sign of distrust. I believe the confidence we showed in them disarmed them. The other priest and myself were entirely at their mercy during the fortnight we were kept in waiting. One day I counted seventy. They are a splendid race of men. Certainly some of the young men were perfect pictures. Of an average height, well-shaped limbs, good round heads, high foreheads, and large dazzling eyes. They knock out the two front teeth and wear a bone in the nose. They have no shelter day or night, only what the trees afford, and they rarely have any clothing, but at night they always lie around a log fire."

Several instances are given by Dr. Gibney of the honesty of natives in the matter of guarding, for days together, food and tobacco and other tempting articles left in tents in their charge during the bishop's absence at the coast. He then supplies the following interesting details about the native women:—

"As I wished to see the children before leaving, the fathers proposed to give a dinner to all the women and children who chose to come. Twenty women presented themselves, and sixteen of them had babies in their

arms. There was not one half-caste amongst them. I was greatly struck on observing how singularly modest these creatures are in their own wild woods. They never by any means approach a man of their own accord, and I repeatedly observed that when any of them had occasion to speak with men she always held a shade before her face—a piece of bark or something to obstruct the view. It is the greatest pity in the world they were not taken in hand before those wretched Asiatics and South Sea Islanders came upon the coast. These have a very evil influence on both men and women, and their employers do not consider it their duty to check them."

Dr. Gibney's visit to the north was productive of much good to the unfortunate natives. He denounced the inhuman treatment to which they were often subjected by white settlers and pearl fishers, and, together with the Aborigines' Protection Board at Perth, succeeded in compelling a reluctant law to stretch forth its hand to curb the killing and maiming of these wretched people. The stealing of a sheep from a settler would often result in the shooting of the native. They are hunted off lands that are still the property of the state and only leased to pastoralists. Thus, with the game they lived upon gone and their hunting grounds fenced in, they are forbidden to look for food where it was once found in freedom and abundance. The white man's law justifies him in stealing the black man's country, his wife, and daughters whenever he wants them; but to take a sheep from this moral professor of the ten commandments is to earn the penalty of a bullet!

So late as September, 1893, the following item of news appeared in the Perth papers:—

"The Commissioner of Police has received the following telegrams:— From Sub-Inspector Drewry, of Derby: 'On the 18th September, whilst police were endeavouring to arrest the natives for horse and cattle killing, Constable Collins was speared through the body. He died next day and was buried on the spot, on the Behm River, 140 miles from Wyndham. There were other narrow escapes. A borrowed horse was killed. Twenty-three natives were shot before they could be driven off.' From the inhabitants of Derby to the Commissioner of Police:—'Owing to the murder of Constable Collins and the murderous attack on Messrs. Durack and Hayes, the entire inhabitants beg that you will instruct your men to leave Wyndham, Denham, Fletcher, and Hall's Creek immediately, and simultaneously make a complete circuit and punish the natives in a manner they merit. The settlers are willing to assist your officers.' Instructions have been given to Sub-Inspector Drewry to despatch from Derby a strong party of police to deal with the natives concerned in the murder of Constable Collins, and to request the settlers to assist the police with supplies of horses, provisions, etc."

Coming down to this very month of December (1897), we have had an account in the press of the flogging to death of two



or three of the natives of this colony by white ruffianism, but not without calling into action the retributive arm of the law.

The treatment of the natives as prisoners, when convicted for some trespass upon a settler's property, was on a par with the Lynch-law principle which obtained before Bishop Gibney raised his powerful voice in favour of more just methods. They were chained to their barrows when at work. Iron collars were fastened round their necks, and these were in turn attached to the barrows or shovels with which the labour had to be performed. The bishop, on finding these unhappy wretches doomed to this horrible punishment—their necks burned in the broiling tropical sun by the heated iron collar—appealed, through the press, against this inhumanity and had it stopped, but only four short years ago. Kidnapped by pearl fishers, hunted by settlers, deprived of their game, and denied the right to roam through lands put to the more sacred use of growing wool and mutton, the Aborigines of Western Australia will soon be as scarce as the exterminated natives of Tasmania.

The labours of Bishop Salvado and his brother Benedictines, at New Norica, to reclaim this doomed race, have not met with much success. The work has gone on since 1846. In that year two young Spanish priests, Fathers Salvado and Sera, requested permission from the Propaganda to be sent on missionary labours among the aborigines of Australia. They obtained their wish and proceeded to Perth. From this city they went north and opened up friendly relations with the natives. The colony was then but thinly populated, and much hardship was experienced by the intrepid missionaries in their efforts to live among the wild denizens of the bush and to teach them how to cultivate the soil. Among the many feats performed by Father Salvado in those days, was one of carrying a ploughshare on his back, fifty miles, for repairs to the nearest blacksmith!

He had to abandon his missionary task once or twice, for a time, in order to go to Europe for means with which to carry on his work, but he always returned with the same enthusiasm to the field of his chosen labours. He established himself and fellow workers at New Norica, a place about eighty miles north of Perth, where there is now a large community of lay brothers under the good bishop's charge—Father Salvado having been elevated to the dignity of a bishop thirty years ago in recognition of his services among the aborigines. I had the great pleasure of meeting the bishop while at Perth, and of congratulating him on his noble missionary labours. He admits that very little can be done with

the older natives. They are, by nature, disinclined to land cultivation or residence in any given place. But the children are eminently teachable, and the monastery at Norica has for its main object the training of these into Christian workers. They become good gardeners and excellent farm hands under the training of the lay brothers of the community. The bishop pays each worker £1 per week in money or in kind, in return for his industry on the farm. At present there are about 150 natives connected with this monastery. They enjoy music and have a brass band. Cardinal Moran, who visited Norica a few years ago, declared in an interview in a Sydney paper, that "their band of brass, reed, and stringed instruments, twenty-seven in all, composed entirely of natives, was, in his opinion, equal to any in Australia." It is interesting to note in the published records of his eminence's visit that an address "from the native girls" was read by one of them in excellent English. The young men are very fond of cricket, and are excellent players. The bishop gives them all a full holiday, in addition to Sunday, every week for games or for runs into the bush, in order, as the venerable prelate (he is now near eighty) says, "not to divorce them from a love of nature and of sport." All the industries of the country—except gold mining—are carried on by the community at Norica: pastoralism, vine growing, olive culture, fruit and vegetable cultivation, and dairying and kindred pursuits; and the young natives are trained in all these labours.

Notwithstanding these enlightened efforts to preserve even a remnant of these savage people, they are destined to disappear soon. The white man's presence means death to the black man of Australia, and nothing will avert his doom. Half breeds, on the contrary, are very vigorous specimens of the mixed colours, and are likely to perpetuate some of the blood of the latest racial victim to European civilization.

Among many good stories told by Bishop Salvado of his early experiences among the natives is one about an emergency system of making "damper." Damper, it may be necessary to explain to some readers, is bread baked without barm or yeast on a pan, or other piece of iron or tin that may be handy for the purpose. Dr. Salvado found himself in the bush once with flour, but no water. He was alone with the aborigines. He proposed that they should make a joint search for the indispensable fluid, he to go in one direction, and the natives in the opposite.† His efforts were in vain. Neither river nor rill, stream or swamp could he find, and had to come back to the

camp a disappointed and a much hungrier man. He found, however, that his black friends had apparently been more fortunate, as he was presented with damper, already done, on his arrival. After eating some of the fare, he asked where the tea was. The reply was, "No water, no tea." "But," asked the missionary, "how did you make the damper if you had no water?" The answer was not too appetizing: "Oh, puty flour in mouth, so, make him paste, then put him on fire"!

Queensland has a large number of aboriginal natives still living within its borders. I learned some interesting facts about them from a Breton priest who had spent many years among these people. He disputed the generally-accepted theory that the native Australian is the lowest in intellectual development of the known human species. He contends that they have a well-defined idea of a creative divinity, and places of reward and punishment after death. Marriages are arranged on the birth of a female child, but are not consummated until she is fifteen, though in a state of puberty at twelve. This custom is respected by the men. The "domestic" life is of the rudest kind imaginable, but women are not animalized. This is the first lesson taught the savage sons of the bush by the civilized savages of the towns. As with other savage races, the women did the work and the men the hunting before the whites took the country. Now, of course, they are found near towns or mining camps as tramps and beggars, and bear all the evidences of their doubly degraded condition under the influences of drink and disease. The men, as a rule, are strongly-built in the body, but weak in the legs. They vary in stature like most races, some being tall and well-proportioned. The women are hideously ugly in the face, but the "figure" is not always in keeping with the expression. I have seen some of the sex in both Queensland and Western Australia who were well-built and womanly in their gait and appearance. Queensland's poet, Brunton Stephens, has not drawn an attractive picture of the native woman in his ode to a black "gin." This is his sketch, not limned in admiration certainly:—

"Daughter of Eve, draw near, I would behold thee.  
 Good Heavens! Could ever arm of man enfold thee?  
 Did the same Nature that made Phryne mould thee?"

• • • • •

Thou art not beautiful, I tell thee plainly,  
 Oh! thou ungainliest of things ungainly."



Still, despite this ungainliness, pearl fishers, prospectors, and many more white men, entice them from their people and treat them as civilized brutes generally do the females of savage races. Some of them are seen round mining camps, and follow a trade never known to exist in any savage race until taught by civilization. On the opening of the Coolgardie goldfields one of these native "beauties" occasioned much rivalry among some of the miners. I was witness to quite a pathetic little love scene one morning at Hannans between a native and his "gin." She had come near to the hotel, evidently for no good purpose, and was followed by a young black adorned in a head-gear consisting of a red handkerchief, and a body dress of an old pea-jacket, and nothing else. He seemed to urge her with manifest warmth to come away from the dangers of the white man's place and return with him to the bush. Eyes and face and hands were eloquently made to plead his case as he stood before her and urged his warnings and his suit. It was a piteous scene in one sense, and a most picturesque one on the other, and I was much pleased to see what I will assume was the cause of "true love" triumph in the success of the pea-jacket swain, who led the, I fear, frail and not fair one away in the direction of where Paddy Hannan made his famous discovery, at the foot-hills above Kalgoorlie.

It is to the credit of colonial Irishmen that they have produced, in more than one instance, courageous advocates of a humane treatment of the dying aboriginal race of Australia. Dr. Gibney's labours in that direction have borne excellent fruit in Western Australia. In earlier colonial days, Hubert Plunkett, a one-time follower of O'Connell in Ireland, wielding the power of the law as Attorney-General of New South Wales, put a stop to the wanton killing of the miserable savages, by one stern act of retributive justice. A party of white "sportsmen," thinking themselves privileged by the unchecked practices of others to "shoot niggers," slaughtered a number of men, women, and children in a wild freak of ferocious scoundrelism. Some twenty helpless human beings were thus shot down, like so many kangaroos, by these civilized savages without offence or provocation. This horrible outrage was the last of the kind in the colony. Plunkett grappled with this spirit of inhuman ruffianism, and, despite the powers raised against him by white sympathisers with nigger shooters, he made seven of the black man-hunters expiate their crime on the scaffold of Sydney. This effectively stopped the "sport."

Some great Englishmen, too, have tried to mitigate the infamies



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of conquest and the crimes perpetrated against savage races by colonizing Europeans. One of these has sternly denounced the whole "civilizing" system of combined murder and hypocrisy in words that do him eternal honour :—

"Everywhere the usual succession runs thus :—Missionaries, envoys to native rulers, concessions made by them, quarrels with them, invasions of them, appropriations of their territories. First, men are sent to teach the heathens Christianity, and then Christians are sent to mow them down with machine guns ! So-called savages who, according to numerous travellers, behave well until they are ill-treated, are taught good conduct by the so-called civilized, who presently subjugate them—who inculcate rectitude, and then illustrate it by taking their lands. The policy is simple and uniform—Bibles first, bombshells after. Such being the doings abroad, what are the feelings at home ? Honours, titles, emoluments, are showered on the aggressors. A traveller who makes light of men's lives is regarded as a hero and fêted by the upper classes, while the lower classes give an ovation to a leader of filibusters. 'British power,' 'British pluck,' 'British interests,' are words on every tongue ; but of justice there is no speech, no thought. See, then, the marvellous incongruity. Out of men who do these things and men who applaud them is to be formed a society pervaded by the sentiment of brotherhood ! It is hoped that by administrative sleight-of-hand may be organized a community in which self-seeking will abdicate and fellow-feeling reign in its stead."\*

\* *Principles of Sociology*, p. 574.





## PART II.

# SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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## CHAPTER IX.

### FROM ALBANY TO ADELAIDE

THE journey from Albany, Western Australia, to Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, is always made by sea, and occupies about three days. An overland route is of course possible, as the two colonies adjoin. Such a journey has been made by explorers through the desert-bush. It is not practicable, however, for ordinary travel, there being neither roads nor tracks across a thousand miles of country. The sea route by the south coasts of the colonies is the only available one for the European visitor. The voyage cuts across the Great Australian Bight. Land is not seen after leaving King George's Sound until Cape Spencer, or Kangaroo Island (lying respectively to the north and south of Investigator Strait) come in view. The Gulf of St. Vincent offers a clear passage to the largest ships that come through the strait, and mail steamers with passengers or merchandise for Adelaide come to anchor inside of Largs Bay, about a couple of miles off the shore. South Australia's metropolis is, in one respect (and one only), badly situated. It lies about eight or ten miles back from the coast, and loses in this way the great maritime advantages possessed by the rival capitals, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Hobart, and Wellington. Even Port Adelaide, which is to Adelaide what Leith is to Edinburgh, can only be reached by small vessels through the shallow waters of the Torrens River, which empties into Largs Bay. Adelaide cannot be seen from the anchorage in the bay. Its position

only is indicated by the smoke arising from the city. A range of green mountains, some fifteen miles inland, salute the eye of the visitor as his ship comes to anchor, and if a native colonist is on board you are soon listening to the praises of Mount Lofty, and told about the wondrous views which a trip up its verdant sides reveals.

There are none of the Australasian colonies so little known, or about which so much geographical ignorance prevails in the old countries, as South Australia. To ninety-nine out of every one hundred people in Great Britain and Ireland the name conveys only a map expression; that is, the southern portion of the island-continent of Australia. I have heard people in London ask if Victoria was not in South Australia! The province extends from the north to the south of the continent of Australia, and has Western Australia as its western boundary, and the three colonies of Queensland (in the north-east), New South Wales, and Victoria on its east frontier.

The origin of the province of South Australia may, by a process of social and political reaction, have had a good deal to do with moulding its government and laws in the advanced democratic spirit which pervades them to-day. The history of the colony dates from the "discovery" of the country by Captain Sturt, so late as 1829. Shortly afterwards a plan for the creation of a land-owning Utopia was published in England by a Mr. Gibbon Wakefield, in the form of *A Letter from Sydney*. Pictures of fruitful land, lovely scenery, mineral wealth, and all that could excite the cupidity of small capitalists were deftly drawn in this publication, and fortunes that were to be made in creative land values were dangled before the eyes of the public in the most seductive literary style. It took the speculative public by storm, and no wonder. Unlimited land was to be at the disposal of the association which Wakefield suggested, and this land was to be sold at a high and uniform price, so as to keep it in the hands of landlords and "society" people, and out of those of the common herd. Some of the revenue accruing from such sales was to be used for the shipping from Great Britain and Ireland of suitable young men and women, in equal proportions and under the age of 30. These necessary diggers and delvers were, of course, to do all the labour, and to create, by their industry and increase of numbers, the land-value wealth which was to flow in a comparatively brief space of time into the pockets of the South Australian landocracy. Wages were to be regulated upon the strictly capitalistic principle of one remove above the cost of



subsistence. Once taken out to Adelaide, workers would be compelled, by the sheer needs of existence, to offer themselves for such wages as would be tendered by the landowners, and the cheapest possible land-labour would thus be obtained, to the great advantage of Mr. Gibbon Wakefield and his friends. This scheme and its cynical cupidity was sought to be justified on the ground that life in South Australia, even under such a minimum wages system, would be an improvement upon the more miserable existence of the labouring masses in the old countries. In fact, this part of the Wakefield plan was hailed in England as the inspiration of some heaven-sent philanthropist!

The proposal took London by storm. Eighteen members of Parliament joined the Association, as did also Henry Bulwer and Grote, the historian. A bill was passed through Parliament, without opposition, for the colonization of the province, and the first part of the Wakefield plan for founding a model state for landlords was a success.

Next came the application of the plan. Officers, surveyors, bankers, a newspaper and plant, clergymen, and others were sent on to lay the foundations of the land-owning Utopia. In due course these people reached St. Vincent's Gulf, and proceeded to fix upon a suitable site for the future capital of the model state that was to be. Then commenced the trouble and the real trial of the land bubble which had looked so attractive and so feasible, on paper, in London. Speculators by the hundred began to arrive. Emigrants, too, in large numbers poured in. "Town lots" were sold, like hot cakes, at big prices; and in order to give all a chance at fortune's favours, a land lottery was set going, in which the prizes were sites of coming towns and cities, estates, farms, garden plots, and the rest. In the end, however, the bubble burst and revealed all the worst features of a gigantic and ruinous land boom. Almost all who had built their hopes of a landlord's wealth and status upon the Wakefield foundation were brought to beggary. Governor Gawler's drafts upon the Treasury, for the money spent in helping the Utopia to flourish, were dishonoured; he was recalled to London to render an account of his part in the whole transaction, and the paradise of the landowners that was to be vanished with him.

The subsequent history of the ill-starred "Utopia" needs no telling here. The steady development of wool growing, fortunate discoveries of rich copper mines at Kapunda and Burra Burra, and the saving labour qualities of "the common herd"

(who were brought out to make fortunes for aspiring landlords), applied to the natural fertility of the rich Adelaide plains, gradually built up what is to-day, in many respects, the anti-thesis of the Wakefield scheme—a thoroughly progressive, industrial commonwealth.

When the province became possessed of a population of fifty thousand, it was entitled, under the Imperial Act, to the full powers of a self-governing colony, and a democratic spirit showed itself in the popular demand for an elective Upper, as well as an elective Lower, Chamber in the Legislature. This demand was conceded, after some agitation, and South Australia took at once a foremost position in this respect among the Home Rule countries of the British Empire.



## CHAPTER X.

### IMPRESSIONS OF ADELAIDE

**A**DELAIDE, combined with its surroundings, is second to no other Australasian city in handsome appearance. It is called "the White City," on account of the bright-coloured stone of which its many attractive public buildings and most of its houses are built. It gives the visitor the satisfactory impression of being scrupulously clean, and this helps very much to create a prejudice in its favour when the comparative beauty of Australian cities is being discussed. Its streets are wide and run in right angles to each other, as in most American cities. King William Street is a noble thoroughfare, containing municipal and government structures, banks, and public edifices, of which any city in the world might feel proud. This street is as wide as O'Connell Street in Dublin, and begins and ends in squares planted with trees and shrubs. One of the special and most charming features of Adelaide is found in the arrangement by which the eye meets the delightful view of trees or shrubs, no matter which way you look, in every leading street. A belt of gardens and plantations sweeps round the greater portion of the city; and as the thoroughfares are straight and level, the effect referred to is produced when the vision wanders ahead and finds pleasurable relief in the verdant foliage beyond the houses.

The very best view of Adelaide is obtained from the range of green hills which lies some six miles immediately behind the plain on which the city stands. Mount Lofty, the highest of these hills, is about two thousand feet above the sea level, and the drive from Adelaide to this point is ideal in almost everything that can render a drive truly pleasurable. The many-sided hospitality of this charming city always includes this treat when strangers from "the old countries" are fortunate enough to find themselves in Adelaide; and full as Australasia is of the choicest work of Nature's handicraft in scenery, the visitor to Mount Lofty, if he has an eye and a soul that can attune themselves

to the beautiful in landscape and in sea view, will never forget or regret such an experience.

Right and left of the zigzag road, on to the top of the range, you pass deep and verdant valleys that remind you of the greenest of Wicklow vales. Vineyards and fruit gardens are seen on every hand, with pretty villas and cosy-looking cottages perched on places from whence the finest prospects are to be commanded of the fruitful plains beneath the hills, and of the coast line midway between you and the sea-bounded horizon. The people who can usually afford to live in country villas have not, I was glad to note, a monopoly of the Mount Lofty hills for their homes. Scores of humbler dwellings are to be found all round, with vines and fruit trees, flowers and vegetables, carefully cultivated in neatly-fenced patches of land. On the top of the range, but looking northwards, some villages are seen perched with houses of a poorer class of labourers, denoting a growing, healthy tendency of city working life to move towards the country also, and to enjoy its more bracing and vigorous existence.

The view from Mount Lofty, looking down upon Adelaide, the plains and the sea-coast, is a delightfully varied one. Midway between you and St. Vincent's Gulf lies the city, extending out over the rich plains which stretch from Cape Jervis (away some twenty or thirty miles to the left) on to the right, as far as the eye can reach northwards. Adelaide looks surprisingly large for a place with a population of 150,000; a circumstance due to the excellent planning of wide streets and of the spreading-out-into-the-country ideas which form so rational and healthful a contrast with the cramped and cooped-up ugliness and discomfort of most old-country towns and cities. The trees in and around the capital lend a special charm to the picture of urban beauty lying below you. A city cannot be handsome without trees, any more than a woman, no matter how perfect in form and features, could be beautiful with a bald head. It is in this respect where Adelaide "catches the eye" more than either Melbourne or Sydney. The planning and planting of the "White City" shows more taste in natural ornamentation than in the case of its scornful rivals, which we will visit later on.

Richly-cultivated fields, gardens, orchards, and vineyards lie on every hand around Adelaide and give you the impression of a country as fruitful as it is pleasant to look upon. With a sky as cloudless as I ever saw above the Bay of Naples, together with the combined attractions of sea and city and



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plain, I have seldom gazed upon a more captivating or more comforting panorama of landscape views, combined with the evidences of potential prosperity all round, than from the top of Mount Lofty.

Adelaide is as fearlessly progressive in its municipal government as is the colony of which it is the capital city. Its mayor is elected annually by the direct vote of the citizens, on a franchise similar to that for the Legislative Assembly. Councillors are also elected every year, and aldermen triennially, in the same manner and by the same franchise. The city returns six members to the Lower and three to the Upper Chamber of the Legislature.

The water supply of Adelaide, which is one of the best, is, I believe, associated with the name of an Irish Governor. It is controlled by the government. The gas and tramways are private property. In this respect this model municipality falls behind some of the cities of the old countries. City rates, however, are levied, not on occupation but on property. This is, of course, as it ought to be, in centres of urban population where extraordinary value is given by the aggregated community to the land. Indirectly, the citizens pay the rates, as owners of property take this charge into account when letting their town lots or houses. It comes to the same thing in the end, but it is the right thing anyhow to establish the law that those who profit most by the general prosperity of an organized community, without any particular effort of their own, ought to contribute most towards the cost of protecting property and of administering the affairs of the town or city in which their incomes are easily made.

The poor and indigent in Adelaide, and in the colony generally, are provided for in Destitute Asylums; the entire cost of which, in South Australia, is, I believe, defrayed out of government funds. Adelaide has the largest of these institutions in the province, and it is in every particular an asylum and not in any one matter a workhouse. This is also the case with all similar establishments throughout Australia. The workers who have gone to the wall in the struggle for life are not treated like semi-criminals, as in Great Britain and Ireland. Their right to humane consideration at the hands of the community is recognized as a duty on the public conscience, and it costs very little more, after all, to house and keep a broken-down labourer or other citizen as a man than as a pauper. The difference, whatever it is, more than makes up, morally, in nourishing an elevating public sentiment in the people

at large, for the extra charge involved in being only Christian and considerate in caring for the helpless needs of the poor and unfortunate. They are all rightly proud of their Destitute Asylums throughout Australasia, on account of the marked moral contrast between them and those pauper prisons in the old countries about which no such feeling can possibly obtain, and they are better men and women for thus feeling a pride in their own enlightened humanity.



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE CONSTITUTION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

THE Constitution of South Australia is as follows:—A Legislature of two Chambers; the Legislative Council, with 24 members, elected for nine years, and a Legislative Assembly of 54 members, elected triennially. The members of both Houses are paid £200 a year each and are privileged as well to travel free over all the railways of the seven colonies.

The colony is divided for Parliamentary purposes into 27 electoral divisions for the Assembly and into four electoral districts for the Council. The franchise for the Council is three-fold, namely, a freehold clear value of £50; a registered leasehold of £20, with three years to run, or right of purchase; and an occupying dwelling-house of the clear annual value of £25. The four electoral districts return six members each to the Council.

The 27 divisions given above return, in double member constituencies, 54 members to the Legislative Assembly. The franchise for this branch of the Legislature is one of adult suffrage—women having been admitted to the franchise last year. The Parliamentary division possessing the smallest number of votes in the province is that of the Northern Territory, with only 733 electors—a constituency, by the way, which can claim to be, in size and extent, the champion Parliamentary division of the world, as it extends over no less than 320,000 square miles, or 320,000,000 acres of land!

The general election takes place in one day, and provision is made whereby an absent voter can record his vote by, I think, a registered letter, addressed to the presiding officer of the polling district in which the elector resides.

The South Australian Assembly is a rather handsome building externally, and on a scale of structural taste and expense about equal to that of a municipal council of some second-rate English

city. The population of the colony requires no larger or more costly building. The Chamber itself is very tastefully decorated, the walls being hung with the portraits of former Speakers and Governors; marble pillars lending a stately air to the apartment, while elaborate chandeliers, diffusing their electric light, are suspended from the centre of the roof.

The acoustic properties of the Chamber are not what they ought to be in a place constructed for fifty-four law-makers. Otherwise the convenience of members is generously and intelligently provided for, and forms a marked contrast in this respect with the absence of both intelligence and consideration in the accommodation of the British House of Commons. Each member has a writing-desk attached to his place for note-taking and correspondence, and in which he can store his letters and papers. Ushers pass in and out of the Chamber freely, and carry messages or bring books to members in their places. There is no Opposition bench arrangement in the Assembly. All members ballot for seats at the commencement of each session, and sit, irrespective of parties, in all parts of the Chamber. This is not a good plan. It necessitates a member turning round, when replying to an opponent who may be sitting behind him, and must lead to unpleasantness sometimes if, for instance, a speaker has to give a debating dressing down to some member who may be next to him on the same seat.

I thought the speaking in the Assembly good all round. There was no attempt at eloquence or declamation. There was, instead, very clear and animated talking on the part of men who were evidently well informed upon what they were debating. The speeches, as in every Parliament everywhere, were too long, and this seemed to invite a kind of running comment, from various quarters, upon what required such lengthened exposition. These interruptions were tolerated by the Speaker as if it were in accord with a recognized rule of debate. They appeared somewhat unseemly, and suggested the idea of a Vestry rather than that of a deliberative Assembly. To a practised speaker an interruption, if germane to the subject or generally intelligent in its exclamatory comment, is a welcome help in developing his case or in helping argument; but to most speakers it is about as fair treatment as would be the flinging of sticks at a runner's legs while he was engaged in a race. To trip up a speaker in that way ought to be considered as unfair as to trip up a runner in a football field.

Parties in South Australian politics take the names we are only



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too familiar with in the old countries. Liberals and Conservatives had the field to themselves in this colony until so late as 1892. The Labour Party then entered the arena and obtained, almost in one session, the balance of power which it has since held. The rise of this new Parliamentary influence was rapid and almost dramatic in its nature. As is, I believe, the case with the Parliamentary Labour Parties of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, that of South Australia owes its origin mainly to the failure of the great maritime strike of 1890. The crushing defeat inflicted upon the trades bodies in that desperate struggle of capital and labour, opened the eyes of Australian Trades Unionism to the inefficacy of the strike as a weapon of combat against the material and political resources of their capitalist opponents. It was a fight on the part of the organized workers, not alone against federated employers but practically, against the governments and legislatures of the colonies as well, and defeat of the completest kind was the inevitable consequence. But defeat begat wisdom. Out of the bitter experience obtained in the struggle, the advocates of political or Parliamentary media, as a substitute for the old warfare with blank-cartridge methods, gained ground in the Trades Unions, and led the way towards the more scientific means of fighting the cause of Labour from within as well as from without the law-making and governing legislatures.

The Trades and Labour Council of Adelaide summoned a conference of Labour bodies in that city in the winter of 1890, when the plans and programme of a Parliamentary Labour Party were adopted. Steps were at once taken to ascertain who among the leading advocates of the cause of the workers in the colony would be most likely to obtain the largest amount of support from the Labour ranks generally in the event of Parliamentary contests arising before the next general election. In due course three names were agreed upon all round, and the following political platform was promulgated :—

“Stopping any further alienation of Crown Lands, and substituting instead a system of State leasing.

“The remission of the duties on tea, coffee, cocoa, kerosene, and upon articles which cannot be grown or produced in the colony; any resulting deficiency in the revenue to be made up by an increase in the land tax.

“Amendment of Land Values Assessment Act of 1893 (known as Part XIX.).

“Encouragement of local industries and the further development of the resources of the colony.

"A Workshops and Factories Bill, Steam Boilers Inspection and Registration Bill, and an Early-Closing Bill, on the lines recommended in the report of the Factories and Shops Commission; Eight Hours Bill, and a Bill to amend the Marine Board and Navigation Act.

"Amendment of the Electoral Laws by giving greater facilities for the transfer of electors from one district to another, a redistribution of seats on the basis of population, and the adoption of adult suffrage.

"Reform of the Legislative Council in the direction of shortening the term of membership, and reducing the rental qualification from £25 to £10.

"The establishment of a Department of Labour.

"The establishment of a State Bank of Issue.

"A Trades Hall site, or sum on Estimates for that purpose.

"Opposed to Land-grant Railways.

"Repeal of the Indian Immigration Acts.

"Prohibiting the influx of Asiatic and servile races, and restricting the introduction of immigrants bound to service before arrival in South Australia.

"The introduction of the referendum.

"The establishment of a State export department for wheat, wool, wine, and other agricultural and horticultural produce, by giving assistance in the shape of advances and facilities of transit, so that producers may be able to obtain the full benefit of foreign markets."

The adoption and publication of this very comprehensive and popular platform placed the Labour cause on a recognized Parliamentary position in all the constituencies. Three Labour candidates were soon after returned to the Upper Chamber, while in the general election of 1893 the new party succeeded in capturing no less than sixteen seats; eight in the Assembly and six in the Council; a controlling vote in both Houses. This was turning the tables with a (Parliamentary) vengeance.

The record of the Party in the Legislature has fully justified the hopes inspired by the substitution of political for previous methods of action by the workers of South Australia. They have succeeded in moulding legislation in the right direction. Progressive enactments (to which further reference will be made), which have embraced several items in the programme of the party, are largely, if not entirely, due to the strength and advocacy of the Labour members in both Chambers. They have inoculated the Liberal Party with many ideas of advanced reform, and have convinced the country that a Parliament without direct representatives from the labouring ranks of the community cannot be a popular or truly representative Legislature.

The members of the party are all "direct" workers, and comprise compositors, coach-trimmer, sadler, tanner, shearer, miner, engineers, two labourers, and a seaman. This qualification of

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"direct" representative for the Labour Party was dictated and insisted upon by the trades organizations at their conferences, and the result has justified the seeming arbitrariness of the condition. Workmen are, after all, the proper spokesmen and advocates of their class. They know and feel, as no altruistic lawyer or self-denying capitalist can, what the labouring masses want in their desires for a better and brighter social life, and though they may lack the training and gifts of expression possessed by persons more favoured in culture and education, average Trades Unionists have all the qualities needed to make known what is required by those who elect them to speak their wants and wills in Parliament.

The members of the South Australian Parliamentary Labour Party impressed me with the conviction that they were eminently practical, rather than eloquently visionary, in their politics. They did not seem to place the achievement of the Socialistic millennium as the one and only mission of their Party. Some, it is true, declare themselves Socialists, while others profess Henry George's Single Tax creed, and others still proclaim their belief in economic principles making for a kind of collectivist compound of Herbert Spencer and Karl Marx. But the Party, as such, believed above everything in the wisdom of being a solid body, and a determining factor in the Legislature of their colony. They realized the vital necessity of unity in their ranks, if they were to have a fair chance of making Parliamentary weapons serve the interests and safeguard the cause of labour where their most potent enemies had hitherto held the whole field against them. One of the leaders\* enforced the common-sense side of a united Party, as against individual, action in political warfare with unanswerable force and directness when he said:—

"No party is run exactly on the lines that I think best, but some are in direct opposition to my views. Working alone, my influence is best represented by a cipher. By joining that party whose aims and policy are nearest my own, I can ensure the success of some of the things I want to see brought about, and at the same time I can use my voice and vote to convert the other members of the party to my way of thinking. On the other hand, by standing aloof I play the game of the other side, and prove myself false to the principles I profess by assisting to prevent the adoption of measures which I believe necessary to the welfare of the people. For a democrat to stand aside, because the whole of the party do not agree with him in every detail of organization and policy, is inconceivable. Such a man would be no democrat at all, but a self-satisfied egoist, subordinating the welfare of his fellows to the assertion of his own opinions."

\* Mr. E. L. Batchelor, M.P., Democratic Club, Adelaide, March 5th, 1895.

Four years have now tested the solidarity of the Party with the temptations to splits and intrigues, and all the other influences which belong to Parliamentary life, and the test has been withstood. The members have remained a unit in their party policy and action. This in itself, when considered from the point of view of Labour members as an absolutely necessary factor in the moulding of all future legislative enactments, makes far more for the ultimate good of the cause than even those measures which the Party have succeeded in persuading the Liberals to aid them in passing into law since 1893.

They are a well-informed body of men, mainly of the Burns, Fenwick, and Sam Woods stamp; good speakers, industrious members, level-headed, and devoted to the interests they have been elected to serve. They are diligent readers of "Fabian essays," as are, in fact, all Australian Labour leaders, and traces of this line of study are found in their speeches upon economic issues. They do not confine their Parliamentary efforts solely to Labour matters. Everything that concerns the welfare or progress of their colony appeals to and obtains sympathetic attention from them in the Legislature. They are (excepting those who are single taxers) protectionists, as against European or Asiatic producers, but favour inter-colonial free trade. They are ardent free educationalists and unanimously secularist on the schools question. On the temperance issue, they favour local veto, but not prohibition.\* Federation, as between the Australian colonies, finds a mild support among them, while Imperial Federation receives none. I observed that when Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton made his state entry as governor into Adelaide, in October, 1895, the Labour members were as conspicuous by their absence from the ceremonies of the reception as was anything in the shape of a popular welcome from the people who looked on at the procession through the streets.

The members of the Liberal and Conservative parties (those of them whom I had the pleasure of meeting) resembled the average middle-class man and politician of the old countries. Lawyers, a few men of other professions, pastoralists, landowners, and more or less successful merchants, make up the ranks of these parties. In dress and in conversation they are typical of the men of their class in the other colonies—a little of the common Australian (and American) weakness for diamond rings,

\* In a measure recently passed into law for regulating the sale of liquor, the South Australian Parliament has penalized the employment of barmaids in selling intoxicating drinks behind a public-house bar.

mitigated, however, by an equal manliness of bearing, and an up-to-date fulness of information upon matters relating to the affairs of the English-speaking world.

One meets with little or nothing in these new countries of the mental "cad" so common in the old ones. There is the proverbial "Jackeroo," of course, but his name stamps him with the average Australian contempt for the "don't-cher-know" species of useless humanity on whom an impotent education has been expended. This sample of degenerate middle-classism has not reproduced any corresponding type of "native sons" at the antipodes. There are, however, both in South Australia and the sister colonies, types of the title-aspiring people of wealth who are so numerous among the ennobled ginger-beer makers, ironmongers, upholsterers, and brewers in Great Britain and Ireland. There may exist in many minds here in England an excuse for this vulgarizing of the militant and romantic idea of the knights of old, and of the time when—

"They carved at the meal  
In their gloves of steel,  
And drank the red wine  
Through the helmet barred."

There is a Court here where "a fountain of honour" is located, and this influence has to be utilized so as to buttress "the classes" with recruits from "the merchant princes" of the afore-said plumbers, hosiers, chair-makers, and liquor sellers. But what one fails to understand is how, in the more robust democratic atmosphere of Australasia, this pitiable hunger for handles to names has afflicted the Sir Lancelot squatters, the Sir Godefroy fatmen, and the others who chance to become the premiers of colonies or mayors of Melbourne or Sydney. *Cherchez la femme* is said to give a key to the solution of this enigma. Possibly this explains it. These antipodean knights are not a numerous body, however, and the popular sentiment of the colonies is so strong in its sarcastic estimate of this section of "Sassiety" that it will ultimately be laughed out of Australasian life.



## CHAPTER XII.

### LAND TAXATION

**S**OUTH AUSTRALIA was the first of the colonies to lead the way in a direct tax upon land, and the adding of such a measure to the other progressive laws on the statute book was hastened by, if not actually due to, the presence of the Labour party in the Legislature. Such an Act was called for by the popular voice of the country and in the industrial interests of the working classes, owing to the accumulation in a few hands of immense areas of the colony's soil, and to land speculation generally. The whole of the rich Adelaide plains had been alienated along with some ten or a dozen million acres of more or less valuable land elsewhere, and it began to dawn upon the minds of the people that they were allowing their colony to follow, in this respect, in the footsteps of the old countries, and have its whole area ultimately owned by a landlord class. In fact, the spirit of Gibbon Wakefield's scheme in silent operation was engaged in grabbing for the advantage of a few what should be owned by the State for all. Land reform was therefore a popular issue, and the advent of Henry George to the colonies six or seven years ago imparted a powerful impetus to the cause. The initial programme of the Parliamentary Labour Party emphasised the importance of direct taxation on land, and, as a result of these influences and movements, the Kingston Ministry carried its "Taxation and Amendment Act" in 1894, and in so doing helped the progressive ministries of New Zealand and New South Wales to walk shortly afterwards in the same legislative footsteps.

The Act under clause 4 specifies the amount of the tax to be, "An additional land tax of one halfpenny for every pound sterling exceeding the amount of five thousand pounds of the total assessed unimproved value of all land owned by any party." Small owners are thus exempted, and are liable only to the income tax which all property-owning people and others liable have to pay in a

graduated scale under this same Act. A special land tax is also levied upon absentees. The Act says: "An absentee land tax of twenty per centum on and added to the amount of land tax, and additional land tax payable in respect of land owned by absentees." An "absentee" owner is defined as "any person who shall have been absent from or resident out of South Australia for at least two years immediately prior to the date on which the assessment shall be made." Exceptions are made in respect to land which supports public or charitable purposes, or land owned by life assurance societies doing business in South Australia.

Precautions are also taken in the Act against any evasion of the land or absentee tax by the process of manipulating ownership. No change of ownership or other expedient is to be recognized as legally carried out until all the taxes imposed by the Act are paid, and any attempt to assign or convey by deed or trust any such property with the object of escaping this fiscal liability is, under clause 14, declared to be a fraud, and punishable by law.

Holders of land under a perpetual lease from the State, which may have been granted under or pursuant to the Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893, are also liable to the land tax imposed by the Act of 1894.

The income tax imposed by the same law is thus graduated: "On all incomes derived from personal exertion, at the rate of fourpence halfpenny for every pound sterling of the taxable amount thereof up to and inclusive of the sum of eight hundred pounds, and at the rate of sixpence per pound sterling of such amount above the sum of eight hundred pounds. Of all income consisting of the produce of property at the rate of ninepence for every pound sterling up to eight hundred, and at the rate of one shilling per pound above that sum." This income tax applies, of course, to landed property as well as to all other kinds.

Like the other colonies, South Australia has its small but energetic band of "Single Taxers," who are working energetically in the press and on the platform for the radical fiscal reform advocated with such force and captivating literary style in "Progress and Poverty." Had George been sent by some fiscal providence to South Australia, immediately after the collapse of the Gibbon Wakefield scheme, in all probability there would be a single tax state among the civilized governments of to-day. Unfortunately Wakefield was followed by Torrens and the free trade in land

theories, which were deemed "very advanced" thirty years ago. What the landlord-Utopia builder of the thirties failed to accomplish for the divine right of landowning (by booms and lotteries) the author of the Real Property Act carried out to an extent, in the Fifties; not alone for this, but for several of the sister colonies in which this law was adopted. The equally sacred right of buying and holding land for the manufacture of fortunes out of speculative enterprise in the future labour and necessities of industrial communities, was made a profitable proceeding by means of cheap and easy registration and transfer. Hence it is that the best land of South Australia is held to-day by a few individuals, who do not work it themselves, while a value, estimated at £30,000,000, is given to this property by the 400,000 people of the colony, who have to send their unemployed a hundred miles north of the fertile, landlord-owned Adelaide plains to earn bread on the banks of the Murray.

The existing land laws of South Australia, and of all the colonies in fact, are on the lines of freehold tenure; modified to some extent by such measures for taxing land as that referred to, and also by administrative reforms which will tend to keep the land yet in possession of the state from being alienated. There is an enormous area of this land still left, but it is of the poorer kind of soil and situated mostly in the northern part of the colony. Land is leased by the state for a number of years at a very low rent, with the right of purchase by the tenant, but a limit is now placed by law upon the amount of land which any one person can buy as his property. Land Boards have been created under recent acts for the purpose of allotting blocks of land for agricultural or pastoral purposes, and for fixing the rent for same and determining the price, if purchase is preferred to leasing by intending buyers.

The *Public Service Review* of Adelaide for the month of December, 1895, gives the following summary of the regulations for the leasing or selling of state lands in South Australia:—

"COVENANTS OF LEASE.

"All kinds of lease are subject:—

- "1. To payment of rent annually in advance, and all rates and taxes. Rent in arrear is liable to a penalty of five per cent. during first month, 10 per cent. during second month; after that the lease is liable to forfeiture.
- "2. To keep and maintain all improvements on the land in good repair.
- "3. To keep the land free from vermin, and to fill up rabbit burrows.
- "4. To destroy all proclaimed noxious weeds.
- "5. All minerals, metals, and precious stones are reserved to the Crown, with power to enter upon the land and remove the minerals, &c.



"6. The right of authorized persons to enter upon and examine the condition of the demised premises.

"7. Lease may be resumed after three months' notice and paying compensation.

"Right-of-purchase and perpetual lessees are required in addition :—

- (a) To fence the land within five years, and to maintain such fence.
- (b) Not to sublet or assign without Commissioner's consent.
- (c) To insure and keep insured all buildings belonging to the Crown.
- (d) To allow persons with mineral leases or licenses ingress to and egress from the land, and to work same for minerals.
- (e) Holding not to exceed £5000 unimproved value.
- (f) Unless acceptance of revaluation of rent is notified within six months of notice, right of renewal after the then current term of lease will be forfeited.
- (g) Lessees holding under personal residence condition must reside on the land nine months in each year. Residence by any member of the lessee's family is a compliance with the provision.

"Homestead block leases require also—(a) Not over twenty acres to be held by each lessee; (b) the Commissioner may dispose of surplus waters on the land without paying a compensation; (c) if half the land is cultivated for seven years with vines or fruit trees, £2 for every such acre will be allowed off the purchase money, the allowance not to exceed half the purchase money, and the provisions not to apply within ten miles of Adelaide. Only persons over eighteen years of age and who gain a livelihood by their own labour can hold a homestead block. The lease is for twenty-one years, and no lessee can hold or be interested in more than two blocks at the same time, such blocks not to be more than half a mile apart.

#### "RIGHT OF PURCHASE.

"Lessees holding on right of purchase may purchase after first six years of the term. The lease has twenty-one years' currency, with a right of renewal for a similar term at a rental and purchase money to be fixed by the Land Board twelve months previous to the expiration of the first term of the lease.

#### "PERPETUAL LEASES

have rents revised by a Land Board every fourteen years, at least a year before expiry of the then current period, and if not accepted within six months, lease will cease at the end of current fourteen years. Perpetual leases under Act 584, of 1893, have no revaluation, but lessee must pay land tax.

#### "RE-OFFER OF FORFEITED LANDS.

"Forfeited right of purchase or perpetual lease lands as above may be re-offered at rentals fixed by Land Boards.

#### "EDUCATIONAL LANDS

are lands the revenue from which is, theoretically, devoted to education. Leases of these lands are issued in perpetuity, and are dealt with in every respect as if the lands were ordinary Crown lands.

#### "FOREST LANDS.

"Leases of these lands are also disposed of in the same manner as ordinary Crown leases. They may be for any term not exceeding forty-two years.

#### "TRANSFERS.

"Any right-of-purchase, perpetual, or homestead lease of land under Part II. of Act 444/88 may, on the recommendation of a Land Board, and the approval

of the Commissioner, be transferred; but the transferee cannot then hold under any tenure any land the unimproved value of which shall exceed £5000, omitting town or suburban lands.

“HOLDINGS UNDER FORMER ACTS.

“The system of credit selection, which gave such an impetus to the colony when the Northern Areas were thrown open on deferred payments, under what is known as “Strangway’s Act” of 1868-9, was discontinued on the passage of the Crown Lands Act of 1888. This Act gave selectors and lessees of scrub and other lands the right to surrender and take leases with right of purchase or in perpetuity under certain conditions.”

Among South Australia’s recent progressive legislation there is a Conciliation and Arbitration law, which, though not on the lines of the more famous New Zealand Act (which I shall deal very fully with in my impressions of that country), still avoids some of the faults of the measure of a similiar kind that failed in New South Wales for want of the compulsory principle. In Mr. Kingston’s Act there is ample machinery provided for the settlement of trade disputes, and as the conviction is now universal throughout Australasia that arbitration is the right and common-sense way in which to adjust differences between capital and labour, the combined legal and moral persuasiveness of the Kingston measure will doubtless meet the requirements of the colony in this respect.

The Eight Hour principle obtains, by custom, almost all over Australasia; but excepting, I think, Victoria, where it has recently been enacted for certain industries, it is not in legislative force in any colony. New Zealand has passed some Labour laws, enforcing statutory holidays and carefully regulating conditions of industry in relation to women workers, but has not legalised any universal eight hours plan.

The Murray River Labour Settlements, to which I devote separate chapters, are a standing evidence of the enlightened spirit in which South Australia has tried to solve the problem of the unemployed, while the recent establishment of a State Bank, on the Credit Foncier plan, exhibits the courageously practical nature of the colony’s statesmanship in its resolve to make government not a mere tax-collecting machine but, a real factor in the actual industrial life of the country as well.

This founding of a state bank, for the benefit of producers, is one of the latest acts of progressive law-making on the part of this go-ahead province. A bank of this character has been advocated by the Labour Party for some time, and a Royal

Commission was appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the feasibility of and need for such an institution. The result is seen in the addition of the bank to the other semi-Collectivist laws of the colony. Naturally such an innovation appealed to the strongest opposition of the banking interests of Adelaide, and evoked the hostility of the Conservative party in the Legislature. Premier Kingston, however, made the measure a government bill, and carried it by the aid of the Labour members.

The Act operates in a simple manner. It makes provision for the creation of a State Advances Fund through the issue of mortgage bonds. The bank obtains the use of Government credit for its operations. The power of the state to borrow its money at a lower rate of interest than the ordinary public can is transferred to this bank. Advances can thus be made by it, in turn, to farmers, small manufacturers, and others at a cheaper rate than that allowed by the private banks of the colony. The capital of this bank is limited to £3,000,000. Advances to borrowers are not to exceed £1,000, while no higher interest than five per cent. must be charged. Loans are to be made on the unimproved value of land, held in a fee simple or on state lease, or on other property; no more money to be advanced to any person than what would find adequate security in fifty per cent. of the ascertained value of the property of the borrower. Mortgage deeds are prepared by the bank at a charge involving only the registration stamp. Principal and interest are repayable half-yearly during the term of years agreed upon in the loan. The management of the bank is in the hands of trustees appointed by the government, and they are removable only by a special vote of both branches of the Legislature.

The farmers and fruit growers of South Australia will derive great advantage from being able to obtain comparatively cheap money, and under conditions as to time and method of repayment which must give much encouragement to production. One hears everywhere through Australasia that "the banks own everything." In the pastoralist and farming districts this is largely the case, and the bankers have become in consequence the general land agents and jobbers of these colonies. The institution of this bank in one of them will tend to check this land grabbing, and will give, in better terms as to interest and far more reasonable conditions as to repayment, a healthful stimulus to agricultural and other industries in need of such help.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### IMPRESSIONS OF THE COUNTRY

THE impressions of the country, as seen on a journey north from Adelaide to Morgan and Broken Hill and back, will give my readers a peep at the agricultural and pastoral lands in the interior of the colony.

From Adelaide to Fords you pass over a rich country, a part of the fertile Adelaide plains. Several prosperous looking hamlets are met with on the way. The land all along the railway track is carefully cultivated, and fenced in square blocks with wire and rough timber fencing. Furze-like bushes are plentiful, and remind one of Ireland. And as in the old so in the new country, these are pressed into the fencing service of the farmer, regardless of the vagrant habits of the seeds and their vigorous tendency towards finding their way to the choicest part of a favourite field. Many flourishing orchards are seen alongside of rough-built but comfortable looking cottages. Orange and olive trees abound, but almost all kinds of fruit are found to thrive under the congenial conditions of soil and climate which prevail. Flowers are seen round almost every dwelling, adding their brightness and charm to a picture of "peace and plenty" such as passes before the traveller's eyes in the railway journey over these plains.

About midway between Adelaide and Morgan you reach Kapunda. This town has a history, and has played a prominent part in the development of South Australia. I have already referred to the origin of this colony and the unfulfilled dream of a landlord's Utopia, which vanished with the bursting of Mr. Gibbon Wakefield's famous bubble. What became of all the aspiring land monopolists who flocked to Adelaide to grow rich upon the regulated minimum wages of the useful but plebeian workers, who were also induced to believe in an aristocratic charlatan's scheme, I do not know. Possibly some of them found their manhood when hunger compelled them to find work for

a living. But it is consoling to have it on record that the "common people," who failed to get even the lowest wages out of the Wakefield scheme, were fortunate enough to benefit by the opportune discovery of copper at Kapunda. This lucky find saved the fate of the infant colony and, being followed by the discovery of similar ore at Burra Burra, the great industry of copper mining and smelting retrieved the fortunes of South Australia and turned the Wakefield adventure into the flourishing country which we find it to-day.

Kapunda has seen its best days, as a copper producing centre. The output of the past twenty-five years has drained most of its ore resources. Other industries, however, such as steel works and the manufacture of agricultural implements, keep most of its sturdy population in employment. I met many of my own countrymen here, as in every other centre of activity and enterprise in Australasia, and they were as keenly sympathetic with the fight for Home Rule going on in "the old land" as if Kapunda was somewhere in Connaught instead of being fourteen thousand miles away. The Land League had one of its world-encircling branches here, in its time.

From Kapunda northwards to Morgan we get on to the sheep-ranches and wheatfields. The country is partly undulating and the soil the universal (for South Australia) chocolate-coloured loam, but not as rich or as deep up here as down on the Adelaide plains. It is a splendid country, with great pastoral and agricultural possibilities, but lacking, as the greater portion of Australian lands do, the essential element of water. I passed only a few streams on my way, and this marked scarcity of the indispensable fluid must make farming a more or less precarious pursuit up on these loamy plateaux.

There seems to be some want of that intelligent enterprise among the farmers of this district which enabled those of Colorado, U.S.A., to obtain for their once waterless holdings all the necessary moisture through the application of small wind-mills to the work of pumping artesian bores. The rainfall averages less in South Australia than in Colorado, it is true, and no snow falls, I believe, in these Eudunda regions; but little or no effort appears to have been made on the part of those most concerned to tap by artesian boring such water as is certain to be found where trees grew a short time ago. The belief appears to obtain that boring would not produce a sufficient supply for irrigation purposes. But what has been done elsewhere, under equally discouraging conditions, ought to induce those who



are favoured in the possession of such huge tracts of rich soil, to give the windmill system of irrigation at least a trial.

Among the farmers of this section are many Germans. The Teuton makes a first-class colonist here as everywhere, when fixed on the land. The labour and cost of clearing the soil was much less round here than where gum trees had to be dealt with. It was only a mallee scrub that had to be destroyed, and firing and hauling with bullock chains soon freed the land of the she-oak, which was the largest timber found in this locality.

The most useful implement to the hardy settlers up here is the stump-jumping plough. This, an American invention, has enabled the farmers to sow their lands almost immediately after clearing the scrub away, as the stumps of small trees offer no impediment to this most useful plough. It is so constructed that when a stump is met with the knife is not injured. It is made to "jump" over the impediment and falls down on the sod to cut up the other side. The stumps of the she-oak make excellent fuel, and a good number of people earn a livelihood from the labour of dragging them out of the soil. The wood is sold in Adelaide, where seventeen shillings a ton is obtained for it.

Before reaching Morgan I was interested in a crowd of twenty children who were waiting to board the train at Sutherlands. They were returning home from school and were allowed to travel free both ways on the state railway—a distance to their homes of some eight or ten miles. I found this custom of free passes for state school children obtaining in the other colonies as well, and had I not always been an advocate of nationalizing the railways and canals of Great Britain and Ireland (and of every other country too), these most pleasing experiences would have won me over to such a system. I joined the children in their carriage, and had a pleasant time with them while we journeyed together. They were all born in the colony, and were the offspring of German, English, and Scotch settlers. They were all comfortably clad, and this afforded good evidence of the social condition of their homes. They talked English without any accent or provincialism, and appeared strong of limb, bright, and chatty. There were no Irish children among them, and they looked with some wonder at me on my informing them that most of the little ones who attended school in the west of Ireland had neither shoes nor stockings in the winter time. We parted good friends, and they left a pleasing impression on my mind by their healthy physique and their more than average share of the



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intelligence one finds among working-class children in the old lands.

I stopped over at Petersbourg, about a hundred miles north from Adelaide, on the way to Broken Hill to visit some very staunch friends of the Irish cause in that prosperous farming centre. The country all round is well settled and tilled, and some of the best wheat in the colony is grown in this locality. Many of the farmers, who are now socially independent, came to this country from Ireland thirty or forty years ago. Several of these travelled distances of twenty miles to see "the visitor from home." All of them, looking hale and hearty in the land of their adoption, had preserved their south of Ireland warmth of hospitality and genial disposition. As in duty bound, they talked about the terms on which they held their farms. They had all been members of a local branch of the Land League in the time of that organization, and possibly it may have seemed the right thing to their minds to voice some grievance about land tenure when replying to questions touching their holdings and prospects. "How much do you pay altogether in land and all other taxes per acre?" was asked of them. "About twopence per acre," was the laughing reply, indicating that there were not much grounds, in such a rental, for a South Australian Land League agitation.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### BROKEN HILL AND ITS SILVER MINES

I WAS not able to visit any of the gold mines in my tour over <sup>1</sup> parts of South Australia. The chief gold-mining districts are in the Northern Territory, and my trip did not extend so far. It is claimed, on official showing, that there are thirty or forty of such mines in the colony, and that 17,000 gold licenses have been taken out by miners since 1881.

The most valuable ores yet worked within the country are those of the celebrated copper mines of Kapunda and Burra Burra, referred to elsewhere. The Burra Burra turned out to be a bonanza to its owners. Started and worked upon a capital of £12,000, and no further calls made, the mine produced about £5,000,000 worth of copper. Up to 1892 it is calculated that the total output of copper from South Australian mines reached a value of over £14,000,000.

Broken Hill, probably the richest silver-mining property now operated in the world, is a few miles beyond the boundary of South Australia, and lies in New South Wales, in a district known as the Barrier Ranges. It is situated some two hundred miles north-east of Adelaide. Economically the mines belong to South Australia, as the ore is shipped by the railways of this colony to Port Pirie and to Adelaide, while practically all the necessaries of the large mining population are drawn from over the border; the barren land of this portion of the premier colony producing nothing but silver, and resembling in this respect the silver-mining regions of Nevada.

I paid a brief but pleasant visit to Broken Hill, and came away with a most favourable impression of the homely but hearty hospitality of the miners. There had been a bitter and prolonged strike among them in 1894, and the state of feeling between workers and capitalists was, as in all such warfare, very strained, even so long after the end of the struggle. Some of the strike leaders had been prosecuted and imprisoned for their



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part in the fight, and the miners, profiting probably by the example of Nationalists in Ireland, elected one or two of their imprisoned comrades to represent Broken Hill in the New South Wales Assembly.

Some three thousand miners obtain employment in these silver mines. The men struck me as being more of the ordinary coal and iron working class of artisans we are familiar with in the North of England than of the very mixed class to be found in the gold-mining camps. Wages are less, but labour is more regular than on some of the goldfields. The average daily pay for an eight hours shift at Broken Hill will be between seven and ten shillings.

The town of Broken Hill is only now about twelve years old, but it presents in municipal government, sanitary arrangements, public buildings, lighting, and in various other respects a most creditable contrast with Mount Morgan or Queensland Towers in Queensland, or Virginia City in Nevada. The streets are wide and clean, and efforts were being made to ornament the chief thoroughfares by planting trees. The wise management of the town, with an estimated population of twenty thousand, is in the hands of the working classes and for a mining camp they have reason to feel proud of their municipal labours.

Almost all the streets are named after ores—Argent, Iodide, Mica, and so on, in metallurgical order. "Argent" being the leading business street. Two streets named "Iron" and "Gaffney" speak (as all mining camps in Australia do) of the part which fellow-countrymen of mine play in the antipodes fields of the antipodes.

The silver lodes of the Barrier Ranges were first discovered by a boundary rider named Rasp, in 1862, and the mines which have since been operated in the Barrier Range, producing upwards of £15,000,000 worth of the beautiful metal. The total value of the Broken Hill Properties, including the dividends and bonuses over £5,000,000, is now falling off in recent years in the amount of silver produced, compared with the records of previous years, on account of methods of extracting the metal from sulphurets, and on account of the yield and encouraging new and more extensive developments. There are upwards of fifty more mines in the Barrier Range, with an average capital of £100,000, and the Broken Hill Company's property being in the hands of the public. Many of them are but prospecting mines, and the

make working expenses. As is the case on goldfields, these properties were floated originally, not upon ascertained intrinsic value but, as mere speculative ventures because of proximity to some mine with a noted record of success.

The oxidized ores, from which almost all the silver in the Broken Hill mines has been hitherto taken, are largely exhausted, and the fortunes of "the Silver City" looked somewhat desperate in consequence until successful methods of extracting the white metal from sulphide ore were applied. This latter combination of sulphide of silver and sulphide of zinc has been found below the level at which the oxidized formation pinched out, and, it is said, extends to an unknown depth. Some of this sulphide ore has been found more valuable in its aggregate compounds than that which has yielded up ninety million ounces of silver on this field. I was also told that there is no ascertained limit to the quantity of this sulphide combination at the Barrier Range. All this means that Broken Hill has the prospect of a renewed prosperous lease of silver-mining life, and no visitor can "look in" at this miners' city without heartily wishing all the methods, "distilling," "jigging," "electrolytic," "hydraulic classification," and the rest that science is discovering, may be successful in their united efforts to make the sulphide ores more of a benefit to Broken Hill than even the oxidized ores have been.

Silvertown, a neat and comfortable-looking little town, a dozen miles nearer to the South Australian border line, has a few years' longer history as a silver-mining camp than that of its big neighbour. Both Broken Hill and Silvertown are well equipped in churches and schools; the former town being the seat of a Roman Catholic bishopric. Clubs, literary and social, are also in evidence. A powerful Miner's Organization has been established in the Broken Hill district from the earliest days of the mining industry, while all the chief trades of a working-class community are also found there in regular Trades Union bodies.

## CHAPTER XV.

### SUMMARY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**A**GRICULTURE is the chief and most important of South Australian industries. About two and a half million acres are cultivated; more than half of this area being under wheat. The climate, like that of the other (mainland) colonies, being dry, and the rainfall comparatively small, the growth of cereals is very much handicapped for want of sufficient moisture. Still, South Australia exports over a million pounds' worth of bread-stuffs annually.

The vine finds a most congenial soil and climate in this colony, and almost every homestead has got its little vineyard. Great progress has been made in recent years in grape growing, and many excellent wines are now numbered among the products of the country. There are upwards of 20,000 acres devoted to this industry, while a thousand or more people make wine-growing a profitable means of livelihood. Most of the wine of South Australia is exported. The names given to these wines are mainly those so familiar to European consumers. Prizes have been awarded at various European and colonial exhibitions for the excellent quality of South Australian wines, and it is certain that this will gradually become one of the flourishing industries of the country.

The pastoralist industry of South Australia has grown by leaps and bounds. In 1840 there were only 200,000 sheep in the colony, and the value of the wool exported for a period of five years was only £10,000. To-day it boasts of having over 8,000,000 sheep, and the yearly output of wool as exceeding £2,000,000.

This small community of less than 400,000 people own a country as extensive in area as Great Britain and Ireland, France, Germany, Austro-Hungary, and Italy combined! It is 1800 miles long, has an average width of 600, and the sea washes 2000 miles of its coasts. Its total area is 900,000 square miles,



or 570,000,000 acres. Dividing this territory among the population would represent an estate of about 1000 acres for every man, woman, and child in the colony.

The "national debt" of South Australia is, in round figures, £20,000,000, representing about £50 per head of population. This money has been expended in reproductive public works, one half of it, in fact, having gone in the building of the state railway, which has been of incalculable service to the whole community in developing the resources of the country. The railway earnings average a net revenue of over half a million a year. In fact, the debts incurred by this and the other colonies largely represent borrowed money for state works, such as railway construction, waterworks, sewers, telegraphs, etc., upon which investments a profit above the payable interest is made, it is said, by some of the colonies. There are 1600 miles of state railway in South Australia, and the net income over cost of working has averaged  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the cost of construction. This railway is most efficiently managed. The number of fatal accidents represent an average of one in 3,000,000 passengers. Fares are about on a par with those in Great Britain. There is no third class. First class fares average  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per mile, and second class  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. The carriages and general accommodation correspond with what obtains in the old countries.

Being, like all the Australian colonies (New South Wales excepted), a Protectionist state, the tariff revenues of South Australia go to lessen the amount of taxation required for the cost of government. This expenditure averages about £2,700,000 a year, including, however, the working expenses of the state railway and telegraphs, which are, it is said, more than self-supporting.

It speaks well for the climate and general conditions of life in South Australia that the excess of births over deaths during the decennial period of 1885-1894 amounted to 67,000. The number of males born within the same time exceeded the females by 2300, but the deaths recorded a majority of 4200 males over the more lively sex.

The estimated total population of the colony (excluding the Northern Territory with its 4680 of a mixed community) at the end of December, 1894, was 347,720.

I cannot speak with much authority upon the relative sobriety and general moral record of South Australia. My sojourn within its borders was not long enough for that purpose. Compared

with cities of an equal population in the old countries, I would call Adelaide a very sober place indeed. Public-houses are not as numerous, and drunkenness in the streets is very rare compared with what obtains in Great Britain in centres of similar population, life, and industry. The recorded convictions for drunkenness, over the decennial period from 1883 to 1892 for the whole colony, with a mean annual population of 310,000, was but an annual percentage of 0·90 per 1000, and this percentage has steadily gone down, as population has increased, during the past five years.

The prisons in South Australia are the Yatala Stockade (with a visit to which I deal elsewhere), the Common Jails of Adelaide city, Mount Gambier, Redruth, Port Lincoln, Gladstone, and Wallaroo. These last five places are but very small "lock-ups," and are only for temporary detention. In all these prisons in the year 1892 there were only received during the whole twelve months a total of 1579 prisoners, 289 of these being females, which gives a ratio of 0·48 per 1000 of the entire population of the colony. It is worth noting in this connection that the total number of punishments inflicted in all the above prisons, for breaches of discipline during the year mentioned, amounted only to 32; that is, 2·03 per cent. of the prisoners undergoing sentences.

It is estimated that the number of "unfortunates" in Adelaide is about 30 per 10,000 of its female population, which is a very small average compared with some European cities.

Official figures also give a favourable account of the colony in the matter of illegitimate births. In comparison with old countries the record is very good, South Australia coming next after Ireland, which in this respect stands with the cleanest record in the world. The figures are interesting, and are calculated on a period covering a dozen years up to 1892. They are: Scotland, 8·20 per 1000; England and Wales, 4·70; South Australia, 2·93; and Ireland, 2·70.

Summing up the mineral and natural wealth, the attractions, the wants and wastes of this great but sparsely inhabited colony, a scientific writer has said of it:—

"There is no country more interesting in its formations or more varied in its mineralogical productions. Lofty mountains, extensive and fertile plains, sandy deserts, and inland seas are all included in its far-reaching boundaries. With a climate like that of the south of Spain, it possesses the scenery of the Highlands in some places, whilst in others deserts like those of Arabia, and vieing with them for bleakness, aridity, and burning heat. There are chains

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

of salt lakes which render unprofitable a larger area than England. There are marshes and salt swamps more dank, unwholesome, and extensive than in the United States. There are rocky precipices and chasms and waterfalls to rival almost the Alps. There are extinct volcanoes of larger dimensions and almost as numerous as those of Auvergne, and, finally, there are caves which exceed in magnitude the Guacharo Caves of Humboldt, or, in stalactites, the Antiparos of the Ægean Sea."\*

\* GEO. OBS, in *South Australia*, London, 1862, quoted by James D. WOODS in his work, *The Province of South Australia*.



## PART III.

### THE LABOUR SETTLEMENTS ON THE MURRAY RIVER

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#### CHAPTER XVI.

##### ORIGIN OF THE LABOUR SETTLEMENTS

THE traveller in South Australia who is in any way interested in Labour or Unemployed problems, should pay a visit to the Labour Settlements on the Murray river. The journey from Adelaide is one of a hundred miles by rail, and about seventy more by coach through the bush. A week or ten days suffices for the trip, and the experience afforded by such a visit offers generous compensation for the comparatively little trouble involved in the undertaking.

These Labour Villages originated in an unemployed agitation in Adelaide and district in the winter of 1893. Labour became slack, partly owing, I believe, to the cessation of government and municipal public works, and a large number of artisans and labourers found themselves without employment in the capital of a country larger than half of Europe, and with a total population less than that of the single city of Manchester. This scarcity of work alongside of countless millions of unlaboured acres seemed to strike the Trades Council of Adelaide, and some members of the Kingston Ministry, as an amazing anomaly, and an effort was forthwith made to bring such land and labour into effective contact. A committee was formed, Mr. Gillen (since dead), then Minister of Lands, was waited upon and, after discussing various suggestions, it was finally agreed that the Village Settlements part of the Act (584) to amend the Crown Lands Acts could be availed of for the



purpose of organizing some Labour Villages on the Murray river. Competent members of the Trades Council were dispatched to the Murray to fix upon an eligible site for a pioneer settlement. On the return of these agents with satisfactory reports, the first contingent of the Adelaide unemployed started out for their destination.

Under the Act referred to above, which was passed in 1893, "Any twenty or more persons of the age of eighteen years and upwards may, by subscribing their names in the manner prescribed, form an association for the purpose of Village Settlement." The law being thus so favourable, it greatly facilitated the project which was set on foot. A grant of 16,000 acres was made under the Act to the one hundred families who volunteered to join the Association, while a loan of £200 was likewise made, by way of orders upon merchants, to enable the settlers to purchase some necessary tools, horses, outfit, etc., for their needs. Some additional aid was obtained from voluntary sources, but the assistance, all told, fell very much short of what was required to give a community of some three hundred souls anything like a fair start in such a tentative enterprise. However, enthusiasm among the volunteers for the Murray made up for scanty equipment, and on the 22nd of February, 1893, a special train carried the one hundred families away from the capital, amidst the good-byes and good wishes of its citizens. In June, 1895, I found these workers with their wives and families located on the banks of the Murray, whither several other similar volunteer associations had followed them in the meantime, and I will shortly give an account of them, and what progress they had made in their migration during a sixteen months' experience of totally new conditions of industrial and social existence.

It was after dark when I reached Morgan, and as I had to start that night on my seventy miles drive through the bush (Morgan being the terminus of the line from Adelaide), there was no time to spare for a look around the place. One can soon learn everything, however, about Morgan by putting up at "Lambert's." After a long railway trip, and before starting on an all-night ride, I would recommend the traveller in these parts to indulge in a supper-tea at "Lambert's." Better fare at a more reasonable rate no hostelry can furnish to a hungry tourist. Morgan is a thriving little town standing on a bluff over a bend of the Murray river. Its citizens are very hopeful of the future prospects of the place. The development of the country along the great (if muddy) Murray will be very beneficial to Morgan. Property, in

fact, had already been "boomed" a little on the faith of this expected coming prosperity. Some of the less successful Labour settlements are within a few miles of the town. Practically all of them obtained their supplies from its merchants, and this circumstance may have had something to do with the favourable opinion which I found to prevail in Morgan about the "camps" and a strong belief in their success, provided the Government did not abandon the villages in obedience to the capitalistic clamour about "expensive communistic experiments." It was encouraging, after having heard the growling in Adelaide over the public money involved in these efforts to put the unemployed on the land, to hear views more agreeable to one's own wishes and convictions, and one did not care, after listening to the friendliness of Morgan opinion, to examine too closely the disinterested nature of its goodwill.

I was accompanied on my journey by the Government Inspector of Schools, Mr. Hartley,\* who, fortunately for me, was on an official visit to the Labour Settlements' schools. Better informed or more agreeable travelling companion no stranger could find, even within the wide and hospitable limits of South Australia. Mr. Hartley described himself as a "Lancashire Irishman." He was a well-equipped educationalist and, I would say, a thoroughly capable officer in so important a post. He was familiar with the school systems of all civilized countries, and held very broad views on educational questions. Though the teaching in South Australia, as in all the Australasian colonies, is strictly secular, he favoured "Christian teaching" in the schools of the state, where it could be done without interfering with the efficiency of secular instruction; believing, with broad-minded educationalists generally, that the inculcation of Christian truths and beliefs is, apart from all spiritual considerations, a great aid to the mental development and reflective faculties of the youthful mind.

The best and most pleasant way to go from Morgan to Renmark is by steamboat up the Murray. The Labour villages can be visited *en route*, and the traveller has the advantage of the river scenery all the way, while he escapes the discomforts of a bush-road and an antediluvian mail car. We failed to catch the boat, and had not only to take the coach, but to do the journey in the

\* Since dead, and universally regretted in South Australia both for his amiable qualities and his singular and efficient devotedness to the best interests of popular education in the colony.

night time as well. It was by no means a happy experience, but it revealed some traits of bush travelling which were interesting. There is practically no road over the seventy miles of distance from Morgan to Renmark. It is but a cleared track cut out through the gum forest and scrub, with stumps of trees popping up at every turn. The night was as dark as the proverbial pitch, and it was a marvel how our driver managed to handle his team of four horses without running into something. But he appeared to be acquainted with every gum tree on the track. After pacing along for a few miles he would pull up with a remark like this: "I think Mr. Brown's box is on this tree," and he would sort out his mail by the flickering gleams of his lamp, place a letter or a paper in an old soap-box hanging from the limb of a stringy bark, mount and be off again, until Jones, Robinson, and all the other sheep-station people on our way had their postal services attended to in the same manner.

We changed horses every twenty miles. Horses are cruelly neglected all over Australia. They are cheap, and are not at all cared for as in the old countries. New Zealand struck me as being an honourable exception to this bad rule. In cities and towns the treatment is not so bad as in the bush, but Australia cannot boast anywhere of any advance over Great Britain or Ireland in humanity towards man's best friend in the animal kingdom. After each run of twenty miles our team, covered with perspiration, were simply turned loose in a paddock and had to find their own feed, without any rubbing down or other single attention whatever. I was told that "it would not pay" to employ labour of the kind required, that horses were cheap, and that they were accustomed to such usage and did not care!

When morning broke after a ten hours' run through the night, we got a glorious view of the Murray below us, and could trace its winding course for twenty miles through the gum forest, which our pathway overlooked. On the opposite bank we saw some of the Labour settlements, the smoke from the houses denoting early habits of rising for the day's work. We made Renmark in a few hours more, and were by no means sorry to get to the end of our seventy miles' rough ride.

Renmark is not one of the Labour villages. It is more of a capitalist venture. The firm of Chaffey Brothers have virtually created what was a mere Murray scrub into what, in comparison with its surroundings, is a virtual little paradise. It is a small town of some two or three hundred dwellings on a bend of the Murray. The houses are almost all those of fruit growers, who

have their various-sized orchards of oranges, lemons, olives, or vines neatly fenced in, and looking the very picture of idyllic industry. In fact, it would be difficult to discover a more inviting place; with its wealth of sunshine and warm climate, its cosy cottages and fruit gardens, and the broad river sweeping by in graceful curvature, and the primeval forest of eucalypti and pine all round—the kind of arcadian retreat one would imagine awaiting a settlement of unemployed poets.

Six years previously Renmark was a part of the uncleared bush. Irrigation has produced the industrial miracle which is found there now. Without water the soil grows nothing but the everlasting gum, she-oak, and mallee scrub. How these trees manage to live in so dry a climate is one of the many wonders which the European learns from a visit to these anomalous antipodes.

A powerful pumping plant which cost over £20,000 lifts the water from the river into a distributing reservoir. A main irrigating channel, about five miles long, sends the fluid into some fifty miles of by-channels, and in this way each orchard or garden gets the necessary quantity of moisture for a consideration. I was told there were about five hundred people employed in this fruit-growing industry. Upwards of 5000 acres of scrub had been reclaimed, cultivated, and planted within the six years' existence of the village. So rapid is the growth of the fruit trees in this soil when irrigated that orchards were seen laden with lemon, orange, and olive trees covered with their produce. Orange and lemon gardens are protected from winds by hedges of eucalypti. These hedges grow in about three years to a height of 20 feet.

Very little of this produce has yet come to the European market. Australia consumes her own fruit so far. It is not yet grown in large enough quantities to require external patronage. When it is, and when the art of successful fruit-packing keeps pace with the development of this delightful industry, Renmark raisins, oranges, etc., will be heard of at Covent Garden.

Orchards or gardens can either be purchased or rented from the firm who monopolise the irrigation. Or, a person can buy the necessary number of acres of bush, and the firm will clear and plant it, and hand it over in this condition, for their price. Fruit holdings, equipped in all requisites, can also be bought or rented, so that anyone desirous of engaging in this occupation may enter into it at any particular stage he likes best; paying, of course, in proportion to the amount of work that has been done and the degree of growth to which the fruit trees have advanced.

In the mode of one's life, as in everything else, tastes must necessarily differ. It would doubtless be difficult to persuade the town or city denizen to exchange an ordinary business or professional life, with its urban and society associations, for an existence, no matter how attractive or ideal, two hundred miles away from a theatre, or club, or hotel. To such an individual, life under any circumstances would be intolerable in a spot like Renmark. But if one could cut himself off from the artificialities of life in a city, and possess the desire and means to live a free and wholesome and healthy natural existence in a delightful industrial occupation, Renmark might be to such a person a place in which to really "live long and happy ever afterwards."

The firm of Chaffey Bros., who developed this district, came to financial grief over the enterprise, and the government of the colony, recognizing the importance of the fruit-growing industry, came to the assistance of the venture with a loan of public money. This wise and timely help will probably save the little Arcadia, and give its chief occupation a brighter prospect of profitable existence.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### LYRUP: THE PIONEER SETTLEMENT

LYRUP, the pioneer of the Labour villages, is a few miles from Renmark, on the opposite side of the Murray. It consists of eighty villagers and a holding, in common, of 16,000 acres. The village, or "camp," lies about one hundred yards back from the river bank, and extends over an area a quarter of a mile square. The land on which it stands slopes up from the river to some hilly ground, and is admirably situated for irrigation. The houses, or "humpies" as some of the settlers call their dwellings, were built of frame and canvas, with corrugated iron roofs, and had calico answering for glass in the windows. These dwellings stand, each, in a quarter of an acre lot. The smallness of the house plot was justified on the ground that if larger gardens were agreed upon by the Association, men might be tempted thereby to devote that labour to them which should be given to the common holding of the settlement. I heard no fault-finding at Lyrup on this score. The dwellings were, of course, of the rudest kind, and offered very few comforts that would compare with working-men's homes in Adelaide. This fact did not disturb the minds of the settlers. "We want to attend to the land first, the base of supplies. When we have cleared and cultivated enough of that, and secured sources of food for our families, we will then attend to the building of better houses," seemed to be the sensible general feeling of the community.

At the time of my visit only some sixteen months had elapsed since three hundred men, women, and children had been "dumped," as it were, on the side of the river, and left to provide for themselves as best they could, with a very scanty equipment of money and materials at their disposal. The men went to work at once and made temporary shelter for the women and children. The climate being mild, there was, fortunately, no risk from night air, and it was considered no great hardship for the



male members of the camp to sleep under the trees during the first week or two of its existence. The workers of this "camp" consisted of two stonemasons, one plumber, one tailor, two seamen, one fireman, one wood-carver, one baker, two miners, two blacksmiths, one sawyer, two bricklayers, six carpenters, two farmers, one painter, two cordial makers, two tanners, one beamsman, one shearer, three engine drivers, two clerks, two tinsmiths, two masons, two bricklayers' labourers, one iron-mongers' assistant, one stonecutter, one fitter, four gardeners, and upwards of fifty general labourers. This community was brought together, in the first instance, more by chance than by choice, and some of the difficulties which have arisen (in other camps more than in Lyrup) are due to want of more compatible selection. Still, it was intensely interesting to study the life of the village thus made up after its sixteen months' existence in semi-communistic association, nearly two hundred miles away from city life, and I confess I found the experience one of the most agreeable of many pleasant and instructive incidents in my tour through Australasia.

I was cordially welcomed by the camp, and as Saturday was a short day, I was enabled to meet the whole of the residents, free from the cares of labour, and only too ready to afford me every opportunity of seeing and hearing everything a visitor could desire to be informed about. The committee issued a hurried call for a gathering of the clans, and in a few hours' time I had the advantage of being face to face with the whole male population of the settlement in the canvas-built meeting-place. I did not notice a face that could be called "stupid" in the whole gathering. They were all intelligent-looking men, with a preponderance of the number under thirty-five. I asked for "a free and easy" expression of opinion from all, as I was anxious to find out if any of them had regretted their venture, and wished to return to the wage-earning life of Adelaide. Probably opinion on such an occasion is influenced more or less by fear of incurring the displeasure of the dominant majority, represented by the elected committee. But subsequent interviews with individuals confirmed the impression created by the sentiment of the meeting that, with a very few exceptions, the community were so far well pleased with the new order of industrial and social existence, and that discontent had not yet manifested itself.

Prominent members of the committee were asked to tell the story of the migration to the Murray, and what I have already



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related about the origin, difficulties, and dangers of the enterprise was told by one of the leaders, a fellow-countryman of my own, who was one of the pioneers of the movement. But three weeks elapsed from the first mooted of the project until the one hundred families were on their way to the little Utopia. This hasty execution of so venturesome an undertaking naturally led to a good few mistakes being made in many departments, and stress was eloquently laid on the fact that they were only equipped with about two pounds of credit per family, and with very little of the materials which the building of a village in the bush would require. Still, everything went fairly well with the enterprise. An excellent site was selected beforehand by two of the community, who were sent ahead for that purpose, and the foundation of Lyrup was successfully laid on one of the best positions along the banks of the Murray. Timber abounded in the gum bush all round, and both building material and fuel were at hand in abundance. The Murray river produces a plentiful supply of a good edible fish known as the "Murray Cod," while myriads of rabbits abounded in the locality. Some food, therefore, was easily available during the time which necessarily elapsed before crops could be sown and reaped.

The task of planning out the site of the village and dividing the area into cottage lots was an easy one under the circumstances. In a very few weeks all were housed in temporary "shanties," and the work of breaking up land, arranging the pumping plant for irrigation work, and getting everything in working order was well on its way. Much pride was taken, and deservedly so, in the fact that only two men had to be expelled for disaffection during the sixteen months' life of the settlement. All had worked with a will in the rough experience of the first few weeks, and there was no call for expulsions afterwards. It was a case of one for all and all for one. The semi-communistic sentiment seemed to call forth a most loyal willingness to subordinate, in the matter of daily labour, the individual to the common interest. The committee elected by the settlers, on the principle of manhood suffrage, planned out the labour to be done, and relegated the men to the doing of it. Members of the committee were not exempt from a man's share of the toil. All worked eight hours a day at whatever labour was assigned to them. Skilled artisans were of course put to such work as required technical craft, and in this way the community soon assumed the character of a practical and utilitarian organization.

Daily labour began and ended by the sound of a horn at the



stipulated time. Meal hours were of course provided for in the daily arrangement of working time. All food stuffs and provisions are kept in a common store. A written coupon, signed by the secretary, will obtain the quantity of bread, meat, or other requisite allowed to each individual. The store-keeper serves such necessaries only on the production of such order. Families are served in proportion to their number. This right and humane provision aroused no jealousy on the part of the twenty-six single men in the community. The baker and butcher divided their products in a similar way. Entries of foods asked for are duly made, and it is thus known how each person and family draws from the common resources.

No money was used in the settlements. There was none required under the arrangements of the association. The coupon or ticket of the secretary was all the "currency" needed. There are no shops, draperies, or groceries allowed except the common store. No drink is kept or sold in the camp. The earnings of the settlers, the value created by their labour, is represented in the extent and improvement of the land reclaimed, the irrigation work effected, the stock raised, and the general development in and around the village. A government Commissioner values these improvements from time to time. Fifty per cent. of the value thus certified is advanced as a loan at five per cent. for ten years by the state to the association formed under the rules laid down by the Minister of Lands. This credit is given, for the first three years, free of interest.

For the credit advanced in this way the merchants at Morgan or Renmark will supply whatever necessaries are ordered by the committee of the village association for the requirements of the villagers. Produce or cattle sold by the association to outsiders are paid for in coin, and the same is lodged to the credit of the elected trustees of the settlement, and is used to meet outside obligations. Work done by villagers for neighbouring employers, such as shearing, gardening, or general labour for wages, is all credited to the association. The money so earned is paid into its common stock. This is only fair, when it forms part of the constitution of the association, and is expressly agreed to in the beginning.

The value of the settlement is growing day by day, and whether a member labours directly upon its estate or for wages outside, under the arrangement indicated, he contributes his share to the growing increment of the concern, and no more. No complaint had been made against this rule up to the time of my visit, but I

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have read since then that objections were raised to it by some members of this particular village, who gave evidence before the Commission which was appointed a few months afterwards to inquire into the working of all the settlements on the Murray. It was urged by these individualists that a portion at least of wages earned by outside labour should go to such wage-earner. This would clearly be in opposition to the general plan on which the settlements were founded. The proposal would be unreasonable in itself on that ground, and unfair to those members who would have to contribute an equal amount of daily exertion to the general benefit of the village, while the hired-out member was labouring for wages for himself elsewhere.

At the termination of thirteen years from the organization of a Labour village, and the repayment of the state advances, the members are to be allowed to decide whether the co-operative-communistic plan is to terminate or continue. All the obligations incurred to the government in the meantime must first be redeemed, and it will then be for the association to determine whether the property created in the settlement by the labour of all is to be equally divided, or to be held in common under the association plan which first obtained. I discussed the probable decision on this vital point with many members of this and the other settlements visited by me, and I fear that the individualistic sentiment will largely prevail at the end of the probationary period.

The desire to own property of some kind is all but impossible to eliminate from the minds of those who are bred and born under the property-owning system of our modern society. To possess something that one can call "my own"—a house, a farm, an income, or, particularly, some power or dominance over another—appeals so strongly to the ordinary instincts of every class and grade of mankind that it has foiled every effort ever made to found a successful communistic community of civilized beings. The history of the Jesuit Utopia of Paraguay does not contradict this universal contention. This Utopia was exceptional in almost every sense. The Paraguayans, who enjoyed the almost unique experience of some one hundred and fifty years of a mixed religious and socialistic life, were found in the raw material of human society. They were unfettered by ideas of personal right, and were mouldable to the teaching of early apostolic simplicity in matters of property. There were no Adelaides, or Melbournes, or Sydneys to remember with envy or regret, or to disturb the minds of contented members of a community which was in itself

an emancipation from conditions of a semi-savage existence. Religion, too, did its part in cementing the ties between the untutored members and the rulers of the "Reductions." But even this, the most successful of all the Utopias ever planned or founded, fell from the assaults of plotting outside capitalists and disappeared. It is a most singular coincidence that the latest attempt to form an ideal system of industrial life should be associated with the very country in which the Jesuit Utopia flourished and fell, and that the pioneers of the Cosme Colony of to-day should hail from one of South Australia's sister colonies—Queensland! And (tell it not in the Trades Hall, Brisbane, nor whisper it in London Fabian circles!) to discover, after a couple of years' experience, that the principles of an unmixed Socialistic system of society do not suit the minds and needs of an English-speaking community, when it comes down to the work of applying Karl Marx to actual land and labour.

My earnest wishes while I was among the villages on the Murray were for the triumph of the co-operative-communistic plan at the end of the experimental period. Everything I saw contrasted most favourably with the ordinary conditions of wage-earning life, in even the highest-paid labour centres of Australia. There was no poverty or want felt by anybody. The work, though necessarily rough in the main, was not exhausting, while it was robbed of that which links the task of ordinary daily toil to servitude—the feeling that you were at the disposal of somebody for so much. There was no "boss" or master. Nobody walked off with the major portion of the value of a worker's daily efforts. The "unearned increment" of the little community remained with those to whose sweat and toil and requirements it owed its creation. No landlord could claim it as the reward of his investment. Land and water were as free as air to the wants of those who had been accustomed to pay for everything except the air and the sunshine. Surely no conditions of industrial life could be much more favourable to Labour?

I sought out the women folk to find where their views lay. Those to whom I had a chance of talking assured me they were delighted with the new existence. "There is no landlord to come round on Monday for the rent," said one, "and my husband is not worried about the fear of being out of work. We are very happy now, and all the people here seem to like the life very much." Another woman, busy building a fire at six in the morning outside her little shanty, talked very intelligently about

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the change from Adelaide to the settlement. "Our children are as happy as the day is long. They go to school down yonder under the trees by the river, and we are not afraid of them being run over in the streets. It is a good thing to get them out of town. My boy was often given a penny by other women to fetch a drink, and I was forced to use that penny to buy bread when my husband was out of work. There is none of that danger here. Thank goodness! no drink can be sold in the settlement." This appeared to be the prevailing feeling among those who were best able to appreciate the moral and social difference between the life of a working man's family in a large city, and in a community far removed from all that renders the existence of the labouring poor so hard, and often so degrading, amidst the toils and temptations of the boasted "centres of civilization."

The women were not required to work outside their own homes at Lyrup. This was as it ought to be, under the circumstances. Industries in which women could take part with advantage to the community and benefit to themselves had not yet been organized. They will doubtless spring up in due course. Poultry raising, dairying, knitting, weaving, and similar occupations will arise out of the development of the villages, and congenial labour will thus be found for those females unoccupied in household duties at the proper time.

After the day's work is over the members of the camp dispose of their spare time, as most other people do, according to taste, inclination, or opportunity. Some go rabbit shooting, some fish in the Murray, others repair the shanties, till the little plot in front of the new home, or read such books as are to be had.

Meetings are frequent in the canvas "hall," and the affairs of the association—its plans and prospects, the relations with the government, the state of the credit with Morgan or Renmark merchants—are all discussed, for the advice and benefit of the trustees or committee for the time being. The period for electing a new committee for the rule of the settlement for the next twelve months had arrived while I was the guest of the villagers, and I will deal with the system of election in my next chapter, when I come to the "statesmen's colony," as Pyap was called by members of other associations. The chief topic of conversation all through the villages was the work that had been done, and what was still to be carried out. All the men appeared proud of what had been accomplished, and talked of land yet to be



cleared, grubbed, and sown, and of crops and vineyards that should be a credit to all concerned.

Lyrup, being close to Renmark, has profited by the high-class fruit culture carried on there by the Chaffey Bros. Settlers have visited the fruit gardens of the latter place, and have brought back a knowledge, freely imparted, which the remoter villagers could not so easily obtain. To this fact was largely due the superior character of the work done in Lyrup than in the other villages in the nature, extent, and variety of fruit-tree planting. At the time of my visit there were nine acres of peaches, four of apricots, seven of lemon trees, four of figs, and one of prunes, while no less than forty-five acres were under vines. When to this record of work is added five hundred acres under wheat, five acres for sorghum, thirty acres of potatoes, seven of onions, and ten acres under various other vegetables, it will be seen what good use had been made by the workers of this camp of their time, industry, and opportunities during their sixteen months' residence on the Murray. With pardonable pride they also boasted of their thirty-five horses, thirty head of cattle, fifty pigs, and six hundred sheep—largely purchased or bred during that short space of time out of the value of their ascertained credit. Waggon, drays, scarifiers, mowing machines, and other agricultural implements were pointed out to me also, while a limekiln and a brickyard gave token that the "shanties," built of flour bags and corn sacks, would soon be replaced by brick-built houses for the villagers.

The system of irrigation at all the villages is very simple. An eight-horse-power engine at Lyrup pumped water up some sixty or seventy feet from the river Murray to a corrugated iron flume, from whence it was distributed, in channels, to the vineyards, vegetable gardens, and wherever needed. The channelling is extended as new land is cleared and graded. The supply of water is as limitless as the Murray is long and resourceful, and there is only the pumping capacity of the engine to be counted with in the planning of new fields and planting of more fruit trees.

Blacksmiths', joiners', and tinmen's "shops" were a necessary part of the industrial life of Lyrup, and members skilled in these crafts plied their trade in the open air, with rude but effective plant, at one end of the village. Piggeries and poultry yards, cattle sheds, and stabling for horses were removed a good distance from the dwellings of the villagers, and intelligent care seemed to be taken in regard to sanitation. Much pride was



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evinced by all the members of the Lyrup community in the new schoolhouse which was being built on the choicest spot in the settlement. The building was to be a "town hall" and "council chamber" as well as a schoolhouse, and everything required in its construction, except glass for the windows, was to be provided out of the resources of the camp. Plans, materials, and labour were all to be independent of outside assistance. This projected schoolhouse was the envy of all the other villages, but Lyrup was declared to be the most fortunate of any of them in many things, though not in all.

The nationalities comprised in this settlement embraced Australians (majority), English, Scotch, and Irish relatively small, with no Welsh. The religious question had not manifested itself up to the time of my visit. There were about a dozen Catholics among the eighty-three settlers and their families. Some Morgan or Adelaide ministers visited the villages casually, and all the members took part in the ceremony of the occasion. Salvation Army officers also "looked in" now and then, and were always welcome, as visitors lay or clerical of any kind or creed are who come to see how the novel experiment in planting the unemployed on the land along the Murray is progressing.

This camp has decreased in membership since the period of my visit. The latest report issued by the Surveyor-General of Lands gives the present population as 186. It was originally about 300.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### PYAP: "THE STATESMEN S CAMP"

I TOOK leave of Lyrup and of its hopeful and hospitable workers with regret. My stay among them was short, but pleasant. They were trying, bravely and intelligently, to carry into the actuality of industrial life some of the theories that have been urged in almost every civilized country as practicable of application to the steadily-growing evil of the unemployed. "The land for the people"—that is, for workers, for food production, for a healthful occupation, for as many hands as can be induced to labour the soil in preference to a wage-earning slum-life in a city—land for industry and not for rent, for labourers and not for landlords. This was the principle which they were trying to work out, and should the courageous experiment of the South Australian Government succeed—should these Murray settlements thrive and prosper, as every visitor must earnestly hope they will—a great object lesson in social reform will have been given, not alone to the sister colonies but to older countries too, in which tens of thousands of idle hands are an every-day comment upon the evil of millions of acres of land also idle and economically useless, for want of necessary labour.

From Lyrup to the next camp down the river—Pyap—is a distance of thirty miles. Among the duties assigned to the chairman of a village association is that of attending to visitors and in making their stay as pleasant as can be. There are neither hotels nor inns of any kind set up or contemplated in these labour communities. The good old custom of our fathers—a bed or a "shake-down," as the case may be, in a friend's shanty—is freely offered, and what may be lacking in the luxury of the sleeping accommodation is more than made up for in the heartiness of the hospitality. Mr. Ross, the Lyrup chairman, undertook to leave us at the next camp, and hitched the village's best horse to its best cart for the journey through the bush. The "turn-out" was not quite up to a



Belgravia standard, but with a driver who was born in France of Scotch parentage, who had served in the American Army, "barn stormed" in other colonies, and had been elected head of the Lyrup camp for that year, who could think of drawing contrasts? Our horse evidently objected to Sunday labour. This was the most charitable light in which to look at his snail-like progress towards Pyap.

Our route lay through the uncleared bush, over land such as is found all along the Murray—a rich, red loam. The everlasting gum tree was, of course, in evidence all the way; but we met with the pine, too, now and then, and any change from the monotonous gum is welcome to the eye in a bush journey. Rabbits by the tens of thousands could be seen as we ambled along, and the magnitude of the injury which bunny inflicts upon the pastoral resources of Australia could be appreciated from the fact that not a blade of grass appeared above the ground anywhere near where his devastating tracks lay. Everything green is devoured by these pests, and the land is left as bare as a billiard table wherever they locate themselves. Far more welcome companions on our drive were numerous flocks of pink cockatoos, which repeatedly crossed our path. The plumage of these very handsome birds is of the brightest kind, and their flying to and fro over the river and through the gum forest, their chattering and quarrelling, and all the rest, imparted much colour and animation to the otherwise monotonous appearance of the bush.

The Pyap camp probably occupies the most favourable site of any of the Murray settlements. They are all situated close to the river, as a matter of necessity, and are alike equally favoured in available water for irrigation. Some camps are, however, more favoured than others in some respects—less density of bush, better land for grading, and so on; and Pyap is fortunate in these and other particulars. The settlement extends across a knoll, half on one side and half on the other, with all the land well situated for grading and water distribution.

I found this to be the most "select" of all the camps in the composition of the association, and to this fact was due, in my humble judgment, most of the troubles which it had experienced. Some ninety men were chosen out of four hundred volunteers, and the whole of the ninety were trained mechanics. Only four of them were unmarried. All the members were about equal in trade skill and in intelligence. The strong leavening element of half unskilled workers, which tended to promote harmony in the Lyrup Association and some other camps, was absent in that at

Pyap. The population of the village was 350 at the start, when the number of settlers was ninety. Women do not rank as "settlers." This number was reduced to sixty-seven settlers at the period of my visit, owing to quarrels and dissensions; the retiring members having mostly returned to Adelaide, some few going to other camps. A settler leaving a camp cannot claim compensation for his time or labour. He is permitted, however, to dispose of his interest to a volunteer substitute who shall be acceptable to the committee of the association. An applicant for membership will be required to pay a sum in proportion to the estimated value of an old member's interest in the estate of the settlement. The sum of £20 was the price required from a would-be settler in June, 1895.

The area of the Pyap settlement is similar to that of Lyrup, 16,000 acres. The terms of tenure, government credit, etc., are the same for all the camps. The rules and regulations are essentially alike, though differing in minor details according to the diverging views of different associations.

Despite the internal troubles of the Pyap community and the "bush lawyer" reputation of its members, I found a fair evidence of their industry in some two hundred acres of land under crops for their fourteen months' existence as a camp. Seven acres of apricots and about five hundred lemon trees, together with a variety of other fruit and vegetable culture, and four miles of irrigation channelling testified to an intelligent application of their work. They had also built a good house for the camp schoolmaster. Their stock consisted of fifty head of cattle, twenty horses and bullocks, a dozen pigs, and about one hundred sheep and lambs; all however purchased with government credit, but credit advanced on the security of the certified value given to the land of the settlement by the labour of its workers.

The Pyap school I found attended by over seventy children. The schoolhouse was an affair of canvas and timber, but a most efficient teacher and some of the happiest little faces I have ever seen—bright, healthy, and cheerful—made up for the temporary lack of more appropriate fittings and accommodation.

The election of a new committee of trustees and management, by a coincidence, was to take place the day after my arrival. I had therefore an opportunity of seeing "the general election" of a Utopia. The occasion was proclaimed a holiday, and I arose early to inspect the camp before the people were abroad, and walked to the top of a hill near by to get a good view of the settlement and the country round. It was a lovely morning.



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The sun was just rising above the tree tops, colouring the forest of gums in the rosiest of tints. Birds flew across the sluggish river to the bush beyond. Below me, sloping upwards from the banks of the Murray, lay the camp, still wrapped in slumber and silence. I counted some seventy tent-huts, with one concrete house, a store built of corrugated iron, and the school-house already referred to, which stood away down on the flat by the river. Behind the camp could be seen the cleared land and the cultivated gardens, "the workshop" of the members. It was a most pleasing scene in the midst of the great encircling forest which appeared in its primeval density to be shutting out, as it were, the exploiting opponents of labour from the camp in which workers sought shelter from master and landlord and society. While mentally drawing a contrast between what ought to be the happy lot of a toiler in one of these Murray villages, with its freedom from almost everything that makes the life of labour a hard one in London, Dublin, or Glasgow—freedom from enforced casual idleness, from landlords' rent, from occasional want, and from fear of a workhouse—a shrill whistle from the pumping-engine awoke all the echoes of river and forest, and recalled my thoughts from cities in the old world to the workers' Utopia before me. In a few moments the camp was all astir. Fires were built outside the huts, and men, women, and children were soon abroad enjoying all the glory of the morning sunshine and the health-laden air of the gum trees and river.

Election day had arrived! I was naturally interested to learn how those who strongly condemned the whole organism of a competitive society, political, economic, and social, would conduct their own affairs on so important an occasion as that of electing the "government" of the camp. Pyap had earned the reputation of being a "camp of politicians," a "colony of bush-lawyers," "a village of statesmen," among its neighbours, and the authorities at Adelaide found that the credit of the settlement was being hindered in consequence. There had been repeated "ministerial crises" during the short period of its existence, and Mr. Gillen, the Minister of Lands, had to make a new rule requiring that once a board of trustees, or committee, was duly elected, its term must last for one year, unless some malfeasance should necessitate the creation of a new ruling body. The new "general election" of the little community was fixed for this day.

All the villagers, men, women, and children, assembled at half-past seven near the pumping station. A large camp-fire was

built on the bank of the river, as the morning air was a little sharp. The men lit their pipes at the fire as they arrived, while the women and children sat on the piles of wood a little distance away from the real actors in the political event of the occasion. Presently a voice rang out in the clear morning air, "Order, villagers!" and the business of the day began. Nominations for the committee were written in chalk on a large blackboard by any settler who wished to propose a member, and when such nominations were complete a recess of half an hour was decreed by the assembly for the purpose of "having a friendly talk from our visitors," as the chairman put it. The "talk" which Mr. Hartley and myself thought most appropriate for the occasion consisted of advice to the Pyap colony to keep their little internal quarrels to themselves, and to stand by the work of their free and independent ballots, the duly elected committee, when once established by their own will and law.

After this the work of the election went on. Each man who desired to address the assembly mounted a pile of wood and held forth on the merits of a proposed new member of the board, or on the demerits of the old body. Most of the speakers condemned the retiring rulers. "Call them an efficient board?" said one candidate (and a very good speaker he was), "I don't. Where is the evidence of their good work? Is it to be found in an unfinished pumping station? Do we see it in the tent-huts in which our wives and children have to live? No! If we had such a committee as this settlement can elect to-day, if it will, we would have something more than what is seen in and around our camp to show visiting friends when they come to Pyap," etc., etc.

I don't exactly know why, but I was pleased to learn afterwards that this particular orator failed to obtain his coveted membership of the Pyap ministry. Oratory, organization, and theorizing against unfair conditions of labour and life, where capitalism is unscrupulously selfish and more or less supreme, is right in its way. Labour's claims to a fairer share of the joint produce of capital and industry has to be asserted, and the right kind of advocacy in such a case is that of the workman capable of upholding his cause. Trades Unionism, wherever existent, has imparted a political training to working men which has made the skilled artisan independent of the vicarious championship of lawyers and other Parliamentary spokesmen. All this is as it should be, and the Australian Trades Unionist can more than hold his own in the field of controversial combat. But somehow

the oratory from that pile of wood, by the pumping station up the Murray, on that delightful morning seemed to me an incongruity and a mockery.

Here was Labour left to its own laws; unfettered by any landlord or capitalistic right, rule, or authority. All the right, and all the law, and all the land here belonged to the workers. Here was no place for tyranny, injustice or wrong, unless wilfully resorted to by the workers themselves; and yet this most fluent speaker spoke as if the retiring committee had been a board of capitalistic autocrats deserving of impeachment for not having made the pumping station complete in half the time, and the grain to grow and the fruit trees to ripen before the seasons had time to perform their share of the work for the harvest! And all this eloquent fault-finding had its inspiration in the ambition of the speaker to become one of the members of the camp committee! It is on an occasion of this kind that one feels like commending the custom which, it is said, obtained in one of the small Greco-Italian republics of decreeing banishment against all members who exhibited exceptional talking ability. Possibly these disturbing elocutionists were the forerunners of our modern lawyers, and in this sense one can find much to commend in so sane a law. But the Pyap orators were trades union leaders, socialistic lecturers, whilom Adelaide propagandists of a new and better order of things; social, political, economic, and industrial; and hence, by the irony of fate, they were made to become, in the application of theories to practice, the most discontented exemplars of their own doctrinal exposition among the several camps on the Murray.

The races represented at Pyap comprised Australians and English, about a third each; Irish and Scotch, with one German, made up the remaining third.

As might be expected from the reputation of the Pyap community, they had invented a new method of balloting upon a proposition. One would rather have learned that they had discovered a better way of sowing cabbages or in ploughing land. It was the boast of the Pyapians that they had solved the problem of a simple and absolutely safe and secret system of determining an election or question at issue. This is the plan: Two boxes of like make and size are provided. One is "for" the proposition, the other is "against." Two hundred round pieces of leather (two for every voter in the camp) are handed round when the question is to be put. One half of the leather counters has a small hole punched through the

middle of each piece. The other half is intact. The counter with the hole is "for" the proposition, the other is "against." Each voter receives one each of the counters, and as the hole in the centre is covered with the thumb of the voter, it cannot be seen how he votes when the boxes "for" and "against" are sent round to receive the ballots. The chairman announces, "The box now going round is for the proposition," and after "ayes" are balloted the box for the "noes" goes round, and the matter is determined when scrutineers count the contents of the respective boxes. Any (male) member of the association present at a meeting can demand a ballot, and it must be taken forthwith.

It was instructive to learn that women were, at first, allowed to vote at elections; that "trouble" arose in consequence, owing to the opposition of individualist objection to female suffrage, and that the right at one time recognized was afterwards allowed to lapse. Upon remonstrating with some of the leading spirits in the camp upon this injustice and inconsistency, I was reminded that some theories don't work out satisfactorily when applied. "Women vote through the eye and not through conviction," remarked one conservative communist. "It is the handsomest pair of moustaches; not the most useful or most needed reforms, which the female mind is prompted to support!" After this, I sorrowed and departed for the next settlement down the Murray.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### NEW RESIDENCE CAMP

**D**RIVING from Pyap to New Residence we passed by a fisherman's hut on the banks of the Murray. The tenant, a Cornishman, plied his vocation on the generous father of Australian rivers, and lived a pretty hard life miles away from the nearest labour camp. I was told I would find him a sturdy individualist, as most Cornishmen are at home and abroad, and I was wishful to hear his opinion of what was going on in the settlements on each side of him. A bronzed, hard-faced man in the middle time of life, roughly dressed, came out of the hut to wish us good day, when the following strong expression of opinion followed:—

“Am I a ‘Commonist’?”

“Not much! I works for myself, and them there ‘bush lawyers’ up at Pyap will all be for themselves in a short time—that’s sartin. It’s all very well to talk and read about this Commonism, but it’s another thing when you come to work it out with pick or shovel or fishing-boat. I’m no believer in these new-fangled ideas, I’m not. I’m a Cornishman, I am. I have enough to do to work for my missus and myself. No, sir, I’m no Commonist. Good-bye.” And our friend turned towards the river and his boat as we drove on our way to the next “Commonist” settlement.

New Residence, seven miles distant from Pyap, presented some novel and interesting features in its origin and villagers. The camp was only four months old at this time. It owed its existence to an organized effort on the part of some Port Adelaide (unskilled) workers to improve their material condition. Subscriptions were paid into a common fund until the volunteering members, sixteen in number, had £5 each to their credit. Then the Working Men’s Association of Port Adelaide loaned them £60 for four years without interest, and it was in this way—independent of government aid—that Mr. Hoffman and



his companions followed in the wake of the larger and older camps, and planted their homes and hopes alongside the Murray. The number of settlers was ultimately to be increased to twenty-five, but no more. This resolution was a most reasonable one, as larger associations tended to beget dissension owing to diversity of character and disposition, and the more difficult task of regulating the work of each member. Had the Pyap settlement been divided into four camps at the beginning a much better state of things would have obtained.

The New Residence community consisted of three Australians, two English, two Scotch, two Welsh (no Irish, except among the women), two Austrians (brothers), two Swedes, one American, one German, one Frenchman, and one Dane.

No dissension whatever had been manifested from the outset. All the members had worked together at Port Adelaide for some time before deciding upon their migration to the Murray, and this fact, together with their lack of controversial interest in the theories of scientific socialism, explains their harmony. They called themselves co-operators, and, though adopting the general rules laid down for the government of all these Labour settlements, the New Residence people seemed to have no idea of the communistic principle which they were in part applying to their new life.

Their settlement consisted of 4000 acres, and of this they had, inside of four months, cleared and grubbed 130 acres, of which 85 acres were under wheat and barley, 3 under potatoes, and 1 of peas, with a well-stocked vegetable garden in addition. They had 8 horses, 25 sheep, and 12 pigs, and a fair stock of poultry.

Mr. Hoffman, the chairman, I found to be a young Hercules, level-headed, good-tempered, and energetic. He was busy arranging the pumping plant of the camp when I arrived, and spoke most hopefully of the outlook for his small association. Nearly all their little fund had gone in the cost of bringing the families up from Adelaide, and, as a consequence, luxuries such as tea, coffee, and tobacco had to be sparingly indulged in until their industry should build up a credit with the government that would enable them to live a little better. They had been able to pay cash for their live-stock out of the original subscriptions, and were therefore very little indebted to anybody so far. No one regretted the new departure in their existence. The character of their work, the dry and healthful climate, the pleasant outlook over the river and the forest, together with the feeling that what they were doing daily in their labour was for themselves and

their families, and not for the stevedores or shippers of Port Adelaide, rendered the new life in the bush an experience as happy in its moral results as it was hopeful of future material prosperity for these ex-dock labourers.\*

Five miles along the Murray from New Residence brings you to the next settlement, Moorook. The way lies partly across a lagoon, which I found almost covered with wild duck, spoonbills, pelicans, and pink cockatoos. What with rabbits in the bush and birds on the river, and fish in the all-bountiful Murray, the settler in these Labour villages can, if he likes, find a sportsman's occupation for the time that can be spared from camp work. This feature of the "communistic experiment" on the Murray should not be overlooked by those who may choose to visit or join the settlements. The country on both sides of the river abounds in game and the stream with fish. No rod or gun need return from a day's sport with empty basket or bag.

The number of settlers in Moorook I found to be twenty-four, three only unmarried. Counting families, the camp had a population of about one hundred. This number appears to me to be about the right thing for a workable association. Complete harmony had reigned at Moorook from the first. All worked with a will to get through the initial rough experience of grubbing and clearing the land, and a very good record indeed was to be seen in what had been done. Of the 3500 acres allotted to the association 400 had been grubbed and 270 placed under crops of wheat, barley, potatoes, and fruit trees. They had also erected over three miles of rabbit fencing, and had done many more necessary things as well for the welfare of the camp. The "humpies," or huts, in this village had a neater look about them than those I had seen in the others. They were all brightly whitewashed, and presented a cosy and comfortable appearance as viewed from the banks of the river—parallel to which they stood, about one hundred yards back from the stream, in detached arrangement. The cultivated and grubbed land lay behind the village, rising to a gentle elevation, favourable for irrigation purposes and general culture. The water here has to be pumped up over one hundred feet, as the bluff rises that high from the river.

All the leading trades were represented in the Moorook camp, including general labourers and one practical gardener. The

\* This camp has since ceased to be an association, and is now worked by some of the settlers on a lease of the land from the state.

men were mostly from Port Adelaide, like their neighbours of New Residence, and were all good workers and indifferent "statesmen." That is, they troubled their minds very little about "isms" or systems once they found themselves in possession of a good estate of over three thousand acres of land, alongside a river teeming with Murray cod and a bush alive with rabbits and birds. To bring such an estate as soon as possible to a food and wealth-producing condition was the one aim and ambition of the little band of workers, and all things else were allowed to wait, including the "isms." They were all manifestly contented with the new life, and most hopeful of the prosperity of the association. This was likewise the feeling of the women. Speaking to a group of them, they one and all declared they would not like to return to Port Adelaide. "I had to go there a few weeks ago," said one beaming dame, "and I was sick until I returned."

The nationalities represented at Moorook were: Australians, nine; English, eight; Scotch, five; and two (colonial) Frenchmen. There were no Irish (except among the womenfolk) or Welsh in this camp.

As in the other villages, all supplies were served from a common store, but the coupon system, which obtained at Lyrup and Pyap (the giving out of necessaries only upon written orders from the secretary), was dispensed with as being too stilted and systematic. The Moorookians adopted the more homely method of allowing each family to obtain what they wanted, and when they required it, without any formality. This free and easy system seemed to work all right. The settlers had been old friends and neighbours at Port Adelaide, and had faith and confidence enough in each other to dispense with regulations for the serving out of daily food. The men told me their (industrial) plan of working and living was a combination of co-operation and communism, and that they wished to apply these principles in the way best suited to maintaining the dignity of family and domestic life. This association had its origin, not in want of employment at Port Adelaide but, out of a desire on the part of a body of intelligent and industrious men for a newer and healthier life, away from wage servitude and landlordism. This they believed they had obtained in their estate on the Murray, and they expressed themselves as grateful to the labour organizations, government, and friends who had aided them to effect such a beneficial change in their mode of obtaining an independent livelihood. The stock of the settlement consisted of fifteen head of cattle, eight horses, a few pigs, and some poultry.

Kingston (so named after the popular Premier of South Australia) was the last of the settlements visited by me. It is five miles below Moorook, and the nearest of the villages to Overland Corner, a well-known landmark on the opposite side of the Murray. This, like the two previous camps, consisted of twenty-five settlers and their families; an association of one hundred people. They also were mostly from Port Adelaide, had been labouring together in that town before joining in the Murray river migration, and, as a consequence, got on remarkably well together under the new conditions. General labourers predominated over artisans, but no dissensions had arisen over that or any other circumstance. The nationalities are as numerous here as at New Residence, comprising Australians (majority), English, Scotch, Irish (no Welsh), one Swede, one Frenchman, one Italian (colonist), and one American, the youngest and "most popular member of the camp," I was told by his companions. Some of the men had visited Port Adelaide since arriving on the Murray, and they assured me they were most anxious to get back to the river.

The Kingston camp calls itself a co-operative settlement. The rules and regulations as to labour and the necessaries of life are on the general lines frequently referred to in my account of the other villages. The estate consists of four thousand acres, and of this land four hundred acres have been grubbed, and two hundred and fifty ploughed and planted in wheat, barley, peas, vegetables, and the various fruits, including oranges, lemons, and vines. The association's stock (originally consisting of three horses and three sheep) comprised fourteen head of cattle, ten horses, forty sheep, and thirty-eight pigs, with some poultry. The pumping plant is one of the best on the Murray, being capable of sending up two hundred gallons of water per minute.

I attended a meeting of the association in the tent set apart for public business. Each settler brought his own chair or stool or box for seating purposes. Mr. Weatherill, the chairman of the village, presided. He is a fine type of the intelligent labouring class. He was born in Somersetshire, England, and told me he had worked when a boy for a shilling a week at farm labour. The chairmanship of the association had been conferred on him from the first, and no better choice could have been made, as evidenced by the harmony which had obtained from the outset, and the amount and character of the work which had been done under his direction.



I observed that whereas the Pyap committee had decreed a holiday for their settlement elections, the rulers of Kingston agreed to do their political business after the day's camp labour was over. It was for this that the meeting was called in the evening, at which I was privileged to be present. The chairman's speech consisted of the words, "Now then, to business," and it sounded to me at the time as being more appropriate for the occasion than the eloquent orations which I had heard at the pumping station at Pyap a few mornings previously. All the business of the Kingston election was got through in an hour, the old committee being re-elected, with Mr. Weatherill as chairman.

At six the following morning I met the president of last evening's session and election carrying two cans of water from the flume on the hill above the settlement for domestic purposes. "My missus will have breakfast ready in half an hour," was his practical way of wishing good morning to the visitor. Seated shortly afterwards opposite the joint window and door of Mrs. Weatherill's most hospitable "humpy," doing justice to the many excellent bush viands which her larder had provided, I was witness to the semi-family relationship which existed between the settlers. A little girl came along with a message, "Mother wants the loan of a thimble, Mrs. Weatherill," and the kindly woman left her tea urn to find the needed thimble. Then another voice was heard, "Which is it to be, Mr. Weatherill, a three-inch pipe with a faucet or a four-inch?" and the chairman laid down his knife and fork and gave the required information. It struck me somehow that all this was, at least, as interesting from the human point of view, and possibly as helpful towards the success of the association, as a discussion upon a Fabian essay or an impeachment of a village committee.

I had the good fortune to meet one of the most noted villagers on the Murray while at Kingston. This was "the communist midwife," as she was called by her fellow-settlers. Her status as a settler was established from the first. The disqualification of sex which debarred all the other women from ranking as such, and from exercising the right of voting, was waived in her regard. She hailed from "Cork's own town and God's own people." She never had such a busy time before. Murray life was the best thing she had yet enjoyed. The land was so fruitful, and children increased so rapidly. The men had improved, in every way, by the change from the towns. Their treatment of ladies was more courteous. They willingly drove

her at any time of the night to any camp where duty called her. Yes, she was a firm believer in communism. There was little of it in her native city by the Lee, it is true. But Cork had many things to learn yet, though no other city could turn out better doctors or more efficient midwives. She was a firm believer in the success of the settlements, and hoped that communist principles would always guide their destinies.

With this interesting interview my tour of the Labour Settlements terminated. Those not visited by me call only for a few facts relating to them, which will give an idea of the extent and experience of the whole series established under the Act.

Murtho, opposite Renmark, on the Murray, is a settlement founded, I was told, on Henry George's principles. Each settler put £60 into a common fund, and this ready capital gave the Georgians a good start in their new homes. According to report excellent work has been done in fruit planting, and the villagers had got along harmoniously. The estate consists of 2000 acres; 100 of wheat, 35 of vegetables, and about 40 of fruit were cultivated up to October, 1895. The association had had about £1000 advanced to them by way of Government credit. The evidence given by the chairman before a Parliamentary committee, which visited each settlement in the above month, went to show that as much more credit would be required in order to place the settlement on a safe foundation. No dissensions had taken place up to the time alluded to.

Holder, the next camp below Kingston, was torn with dissension for a time, but recovered itself and put up a good record for industry and development. The association commenced with fifty settlers and their families, but troubles arose and nearly half the number seceded. A good many of those who had joined this camp were not of the material out of which any industrial body would make useful members. The reduced number of settlers have got on fairly well since the disturbers took their leave. They have about 10,000 acres in their settlement, and upwards of 700 acres were under cultivation in 1895.

Waikerie is the next camp below Holder, and consisted originally of fifty settlers. Trouble soon began between the married and unmarried men; the latter objecting to the larger demand made upon the common stores and credit of the association by workers with families. This brought about a split. The twenty-two insurrectionary bachelors left, and founded a camp of their own close by. Waikerie got on fairly well after this secession, and has an average record of work to show,



all things considered. There had been some bad management from the beginning, however, and much of the debt due to the government for advances was owing to extravagance and want of intelligent direction. Without a larger quota of credit than £50 per head the association would find it hard to live as such.

Ramco, near by Waikerie, is the "Bachelor Camp," and owes its origin to the split alluded to. It consisted of twenty-two young men in October, 1895, and I was informed that good work was being done by them, and that no dissensions had occurred since the separation from their former associates. The cost of living at Ramco was given at 6s. 3d. per head per week, a higher rate than at any of the other camps, due doubtless to the fact that, there being no children to provide for, the rate per average member of the association was higher. The settlers seemed to think they had not succeeded as co-operators. They wanted more credit from the government. With it they were confident of success, as individualists.

Gillen \* is a settlement on the north side of the Murray; all the other camps referred to are on the south side. There were fifty-six settlers originally, but twenty departed owing to internal troubles. Like Holder and Waikerie, it was another instance of incompatibility of character and indifferent management. Then the proximity to Morgan, with its saloons and other anti-communistic temptations, did not tend to make things go well. For instance, the settlers would not go to work before eight o'clock in the morning. At 10.30 a.m. there was a quarter of an hour for "Smoke-ho"! A similar period for the same indulgence at 3.30 p.m., while they knocked off work religiously at five o'clock. All, of course, in strict accord with what is claimed to be the right thing at Morgan, Adelaide, and other capitalistic and wage-earning centres; but not very conducive, all the same, to the material progress of an association of workers who are their own masters and who could, if they wished, indulge in "Smoke-ho" and all the rest before eight in the morning or after five in the evening, if other men in other camps could manage to do so, without cutting into the hours allotted for daily labour in their own "workshop."

New Era † is the last of the Murray river Labour settlements,

\* This association has, like New Residence, been wound up. The lands are let, I believe, to some of the settlers as individual state tenants.

† This association has died out entirely since the period to which the remarks thereon refer.

and is the nearest in situation to Morgan. The settlers number twenty-five, and were (in 1895) £100 each in debt to the government. It was claimed that the value put into the land of the association more than covered this liability, and that more help from the same source would mean self-dependence for the village in a few years' time. It is not likely, however, that more credit will be given without some government supervision. But in any case the camp is too near to the town of Morgan, which means too close a proximity to temptations that do not harmonize with the camp life of a Labour settlement.

## CHAPTER XX.

### REVIEW OF "THE BIG EXPERIMENT."

THE latest official information about the Murray Labour settlements will be of some interest to those of my readers who may have followed my story of their formation and progress. The Secretary of the Crown Lands Office, Adelaide, has furnished me with the following particulars under date of September 21, 1897:—

#### "VILLAGE SETTLEMENTS.

"Since last report the New Residence settlement, which was the last to be established, has ceased to exist as a settlement, but the land is being occupied by some of the former settlers.

"The remaining eight settlements appear to be making fair progress, as although in six of them the number of settlers is from two to six less than last year, in the two others they have increased, and the whole of them together, though containing five less villagers, have increased the area under cultivation from 4442 acres last season to 4829 acres on the 30th June last. A considerable area is under wheat, vegetables, vines and fruit trees, and should they have a fair amount of rain for cereal crops, with the advantages they possess for irrigating their other crops, fruit trees, &c. (which should this season bring in a fair return for the labour expended), they should be in a fairly good position and produce sufficient to be self-supporting.

*Village Settlements.—Value of Improvements, Area under Crop, &c.,  
on June 30th, 1897.*

Name of Association.	Area (Acres).	Value of Improvements.	Area under Wheat.	Area under Barley.	Area under Lucerne.	Area under Vegetables.	Area under Vines.	Area under Fruit Trees.	Total Area under cultivation.	No. of Villagers.	Total No. of Persons on Settlement.
Murtho . . .	2,000	£ 3,218 13 0	500	2	3	2	7	34	548	19	36
Lyrup . . .	14,060	10,333 11 5	370	..	12	18	75	75	550	45	186
Pyap . . .	9,145	6,176 18 3	500	5	2	2	..	22	331	22	105
Moorook . . .	3,200	3,561 12 11	300	3	..	3	..	35	341	17	78
Kingston . . .	3,925	4,131 12 10	335	..	5	5	..	30	375	17	91
Holder . . .	7,560	7,234 11 11	1100	..	10	20	7	22	1159	28	141
Waikerie . . .	3,330	4,457 4 10	300	..	15	3	..	20	818	14	86
Ramco . . .	3 660	2,896 6 7	460	..	..	20	..	7	487	20	50
Totals . . .	46,900	42,012 11 9	4365	10	47	73	89	245	4829	182	775

From the Report of the Surveyor-General of Lands, June, 1897.

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Amount advanced to village associations and amount repaid to 31st August, 1897:—

NAME OF ASSOCIATION.	AMOUNT ADVANCED.		AMOUNT REPAID.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Lyrup . . . . .	13,560	5 11	83	9 8
Holder . . . . .	10,076	1 0	939	7 4
Waikerie . . . . .	5,655	8 4	134	4 4
Kingston . . . . .	5,851	12 7	68	9 0
Pyap . . . . .	10,476	15 11	243	3 9
Moorook . . . . .	4,849	7 8	133	16 4
Ramco . . . . .	4,631	2 11	222	13 6
Murtho . . . . .	1,673	17 11	27	12 3
	£56,774	12 3	£1,852	16 2

F. DUFFIELD, *Secretary.*

CROWN LANDS OFFICE, ADELAIDE,  
*September 21st, 1897.*

Under Part VII. of Act No. 584 of 1893 the following Rules and Regulations are provided for the village associations on the Murray river:—

### "RULES FOR VILLAGE ASSOCIATIONS.

"152. Subject to the approval of the Commissioner and to such disallowance by Parliament as is provided by section 73 of Act No. 584 of 1893, any twenty or more persons duly qualified and desirous of forming a village association, under Part VII. of that Act, may become associated under and adopt, with such modifications as may be necessary, the memorandum of association and rules set forth in schedule xiv. hereto.

"153. A copy of such memorandum and rules will be supplied to any person applying for the same, at the office of the Surveyor-General, on payment of the fee prescribed by schedule xv.

"154. Any village association associated under a memorandum or rules different from those set out in schedule xiv. may, by a resolution carried by a majority of the villagers present, in person or by proxy, and voting at a meeting specially convened for the purpose, and subject to the approval of the Commissioner, adopt a memorandum and rules in the form in schedule xiv., with such modifications as may be necessary, and rescind the memorandum and rules under which the association was formed or to which it was then previously subject.

"155. If any village association shall, by resolution duly carried, determine to rescind, alter, or vary all or any of its rules or any clause in its memorandum of association, a copy of such resolution and of the notice convening the meeting, with a statement subscribed by the chairman of the meeting of the number of villagers present or represented by proxy thereat,



and of the numbers voting for and against the resolution, shall be immediately forwarded to the Commissioner by the chairman of the meeting.

" 156. If the Commissioner shall approve of the resolution he shall endorse to that effect the copy thereof so to be sent him, and shall notify the Board of Trustees of his approval.

" 157. Until the Commissioner shall so notify the Board of Trustees the resolution shall not have any validity whatever.

" SCHEDULE XIV.

" [Regulation 152 to 154.]

" MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION OF 'THE ASSOCIATION.' VILLAGE

" 1. The name of the association is 'The Association.' Village

" 2. The Association is formed for the purpose of village settlement under Part VII. of the Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893.

" 3. The lands upon which it is proposed to establish the village are portion of the Crown lands situate [*indicate locality, &c.*], or such other lands as the Governor may set apart for the purpose.

" 4. The association shall be autonomous, and its affairs shall be managed for the common benefit of the villagers upon principles of co-operation and equitable division.

" 5. (1) All claims, disputes, differences, and questions whatsoever, of a civil nature, arising out of, or in connection with, or in relation to the affairs of the association, whether between villagers *inter se* or between any villager and any trustee, officer, or servant of the association, shall be settled by the arbitration or umpirage of disinterested villagers, to be chosen in such manner as may be prescribed.

" (2) The arbitration proceeding shall be conducted in such manner as may be prescribed.

" (3) The decision of the arbitrators or umpire so chosen shall be absolutely final and binding on the parties in difference, and be enforceable against them and their property, wherever situate, in such manner as may be prescribed.

" (4) No civil court shall have any jurisdiction to hear or determine any such claim, dispute, difference, or question, or to review, consider, rescind, alter, or invalidate the determination of such arbitrators or umpire, any rule or law to the contrary notwithstanding.

" (5) Any villager refusing or neglecting to submit or comply with such arbitration or umpirage, or who shall attempt to resort to any contentious proceedings for the settlement of any such claim, dispute, difference, or question, or who shall attempt to appeal to any civil court against any decision of the arbitrators or umpire, shall in any such case thereby *ipso facto* cease to be a villager, and his share and interest in the property of the association shall be absolutely forfeited to the association.

" 6. The first trustees of the association shall be :

Whether "the big experiment" on the Murray succeeds ultimately or fails, it must be looked upon, at any rate, as having been a most courageous action on the part of a state with less than

## REVIEW OF "THE BIG EXPERIMENT" 107

400,000 of a population to attempt to solve a great problem in this manner. Should these Labour settlements be added to the list of unworkable Utopias, the fault will not lie with the government of South Australia. All the conditions seemed favourable to success. The location of the camps or villages was advantageous in almost every respect. The land is of excellent quality in itself. The work of irrigating it alongside the largest of Australian rivers was comparatively easy; fuel for the pumps being found in abundance round every village, and the lie of the land along the Murray lending itself easily to the task of channelling and of distributing the necessary moisture through the cultivated fields and orchards. In the matter of climate, and in almost everything concerning the health of the settlers, no situation in Australia could well be better. Then there were the great natural boons of a river stocked with good palatable fish, and a bush literally alive with eatable rabbits; not to mention birds on the lagoons and other wild fowl for the casual replenishing of the workers' larder. Add to all this the free grant of land at the rate of 160 acres to every settler; a state loan at the rate of £50 to each settler, free from interest for the first three years, and its repayment, at moderate interest, spread over a period of ten years; and it will, I think, be admitted that little more could be done either by nature or by the state to equip the associations with the necessary elements of success. It is, of course, true that a loan of thirty or forty thousand pounds to two hundred settlers, on the security of reclaimed and cultivated land, cannot fairly be called a very risky investment of public money.

But this fact does not, in the least, take from the obligations under which the settlers, the Labour organizations, and the advocates of social reform generally are to the South Australian government for having done its part so well in the carrying out of such a scheme. If fault there be in the scheme, as it has been put into practice, it must be sought for among the workers with whom, after all, the whole fortunes of the experiment lay.

Experience has shown that the larger the number of settlers in one camp, the more numerous have been the difficulties in the way of harmonious and efficient working. One hundred men, with a dependent population of three hundred women and children, are four times more likely to disagree, to quarrel over food distribution, the work to be done, and the principles to be upheld, than a community of a hundred, such as a camp of twenty-five settlers would represent. It has, as a matter of fact, been demonstrated that the villages with an average of twenty workers to the camp



got on without dissension, and have shown more work, and better work in proportion to numbers, than the larger settlements—Lyrup excepted. Lyrup, as already mentioned, tells against this contention; but I shall be agreeably surprised if even the "show camp," as it was deservedly named when I was there, has not since then evinced some of the spirit of its neighbour, Pyap, and given to disputations about "the principles" that must ultimately obtain in an ideal human society some of the time and labour that should go to the steady development of the wealth of the village. Up to the autumn of 1895 Pyrup had done admirably, everything considered, and had more than realized the hopes of those who had warmly advocated the Labour settlements plan; but I think I will carry the assent of the Lyrupians themselves with me when I say that they would have acquitted themselves even better had their number been divided at first into four camps, instead of having began as one.

Then there were the difficulties arising from the placing of a purely artisan, or town-working, class where agricultural life and labour were required. To this fact is doubtless due most of the troubles that have occurred in some of the camps. Very few of the settlers on the Murray had any previous knowledge or experience of land cultivation, or of its comparatively hard and exacting labour. They had, in a sense, to begin their industrial lives over again, and to serve an apprenticeship of the severest kind in grubbing and clearing the soil, while undergoing the many privations inseparable from the task of founding new homes for wives and children two hundred miles away from where the old ones had been for so long a time. But, while all this and more could in justice be said as an extenuation of the comparative failure (up to 1895) of some few of the settlements, there was another side to the picture of these Labour villages, which ought to have called forth more loyalty to the general plan of them, and more subordination of the personal to the general interests, than obtained in some of the associations.

Though food growing is the chief business of these settlements, and the working of the land the main industry, there is scarcely any comparison between the diversified tasks of twenty-five or fifty men engaged in such a co-operative occupation and the hard and monotonous life of ordinary farming. Farm hands toiling for daily and weekly wages under the eye of the farmer follow probably one of the hardest, though possibly one of the most healthful, of industrial lives. A family farming its own land comes nearer to the idea of one of these settlements than

any other form of agricultural life, only there is far greater variety of both companionship and of occupation in one of the Murray camps than can be found in a society of five or six people forming one domestic circle. A camp is virtually a village joined in the varied avocations of social and industrial life for one end; not for the commercial gain of each member in competition with his fellows, but for the common and equal advantage of all. Competition in its commercial sense has no place in these villages; and this fact, coupled with the elimination of the wage-earning servitude, ought to render the daily existence of a working member of these communities as happy as individual temperament will permit it to be.

My belief is that these Labour settlements will succeed if a few reforms, suggested by experience, are agreed to by both the government and the workers on the Murray. No camp should comprise more than twenty-five settlers, which means a village of one hundred people. Where larger associations exist the privilege of dividing the land should be allowed, if desired by half of the association. A consultative council of the settlements ought to be formed, to consist of the chairman, treasurer, and secretary of each; not to be invested with any federal power, but for exchange of views, experience, etc., in matters appertaining to the material well-being of all. Such a council could also hear applications from members who would desire to exchange from one camp to another, and could recommend such a transfer, or otherwise, as might seem best for the general good of any particular village. Such a body would, I feel convinced, do good in many ways. It could help the progress of one association through the successful experience of another. It might form a conciliating tribunal which would bring the collective good sense of its members to bear upon disputes and personal grievances that could, with obvious advantage to an individual camp, be withdrawn therefrom for settlement before such a body as that suggested.

There ought likewise to be a government expert or commissioner attached to the settlements for a limited period, to be appointed for that purpose by the Minister of Lands. A man with expert knowledge of land cultivation generally, but of fruit growing and of irrigation particularly, would be a great help to the villages. It is a pity this was not done at the start. A good deal of money could have been saved, and much trouble would have been avoided had such a step been taken. It is by no means too late to resort to it now. The settlements are not

yet five years old. Eight years more are to elapse before the period ends when their lease of government credit and their semi-communistic status will expire under the law. The counsel and assistance of such a government commissioner would therefore have a long enough period for operation, and could not, I think, fail in rendering valuable service, both to the settlements and to the state, in the important undertaking which has reflected so much credit upon the people of South Australia.



PART IV.  
VICTORIA

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CHAPTER XXI.

FROM ADELAIDE TO MELBOURNE

UNLIKE the journey from Western Australia to the nearest colony, you have a choice of routes, by rail or sea, from South Australia to its next-door neighbour, Victoria. You are put in touch with New South Wales and Queensland, as well as with Victoria, by rail at Adelaide, and most travellers from Europe on reaching this city prefer taking a land in exchange for a continuous ocean trip, after having had a month of it from Naples. The line from Adelaide eastwards joins that of the colony of Victoria, about a hundred miles beyond Murray Bridge, with its splendidly-built viaduct which spans the Murray river near the end of its course of close on two thousand miles.

Your baggage is examined on crossing the border, just as if you were passing over from France into Italy. Unless prepared for this unexpected attention to your hair brushes and pyjamas, you are inclined to wonder what on earth occasions the provoking official interference with your traps at this particular spot. The people on both sides of the border are the same in race, language, habits, appearance, and pursuits. They have no hostile intent upon each other's territory. Nor do they suspect travellers of being emissaries of possible invading powers. Nor is it a search for dynamite, or a medical examination of passengers as a precaution against the introduction of infectious diseases. It is none of these. It is an anxiety directed, instead, to articles which are either for the use of the visitor or which can only add something useful or ornamental to the possession of Victoria. "Protection," that first

of all misnomers, explains it all, and you have only to travel on wondering what special benefit is derived by the people of these two colonies from this fiscal inquisition into the portmanteaus and bags of their visiting friends.

It is related that a bull, once growing tired of his Victorian pastures and pastimes, crossed, without knowing it, the 141st meridian of east longitude, where the boundary line into South Australia is fixed as a customs fence against all persons and animals who cannot fly over that particular spot. His owner followed and found the bull, but could not get him back without paying the protection penalty incurred by the thoughtless animal in walking over into the next field, which happened to be beneath the meridian in question. This gave rise to a long official correspondence between the governments on each side of this 141st meridian of east longitude, and it is said that the value of the time thus occupied by the various officials concerned, not counting cost of wax, tape, ink, and paper, would buy the free-trading bull four times over. It chanced that during one of my trips from one of the colonies to another I left my kodak behind me—one I had purchased in America and brought with me from London. It reached me in due course, when I discovered that a customs duty of seventeen shillings had been incurred by it for having crossed another meridional line in coming from the colony next to the one I was in at the time. But this is enough on "Protection" at this stage of our journey. I shall return to the subject again before we quit Victoria.

This colony is referred to colloquially by people in sister colonies as "the cabbage garden," owing to its relative smallness of area. Excepting Tasmania, it is the smallest of the seven Australasian colonies, having only an extent of 87,000 square miles, which is practically the size of Great Britain. Victorians retort upon their critics from western regions, that one of their cities has a larger population than that of the whole of one colony and of half the other with a joint area a dozen times larger than that of Victoria.

One of the many anomalies of these new and interesting countries is the disparity between their relative size and populations. New South Wales, the parent colony, has the largest population, though Victoria headed the list for a time in the palmy days of the great gold rush. At present it is some fifty thousand behind New South Wales, which has about as many people within its borders as Dublin, Birmingham, and Glasgow



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combined. The parent colony has an area three times larger than Victoria, half the size of Queensland, and about a third of the extent of Western Australia and South Australia respectively, while these three latter countries, possessing between them a total area of two million five hundred thousand square miles—more than two-thirds the size of all Europe—have, in their united populations, only about two for every three people found in Victoria.

On entering Victoria from South Australia you find yourself in a comparatively settled country. You find farms and sheep ranches fairly numerous. There is, necessarily, much unoccupied land where there are only twelve hundred thousand people located on an area as large as Great Britain. Still, you begin to think the country "densely" peopled, as compared with the vast and tenantless regions you have passed through in the two western colonies. We must, however, hasten on to Melbourne, as the great capital city is the best point from which to glance at the life and politics of Victoria, and from which to start on an excursion through the centre of the colony. The capitals of these countries count for far more in the affairs of their respective states than Paris does for France. Among other things they often count for half or more of the population of the colony of which they are the seat of government. But Melbourne thinks she counts for much more than all this, and the visitor must be warned in advance of what will be expected of him when once he finds himself inside the hospitable confines of what its citizens proudly claim to be "marvellous" Melbourne.

Australians resemble Americans in many respects, and in one very much so. They have what does not exist in Great Britain or Ireland, a municipal patriotism. They take a pride in their cities and towns which does them credit. Visitors, as in the United States, are driven round to see the buildings, and to admire the general plan or situation or prospect of the place visited, and you find that all the citizens you meet with talk of their town or city in a spirit manifesting an honest pride in its progress, institutions, or plans for advancement. Melbourne, in one respect, holds a somewhat similar position among Australian cities to that which a professional beauty occupies among the less advertised members of her sex. The one demands your praise from the shop windows, while you are permitted a little latitude of judgment in the case of the lady walking in the street, who does not challenge your admiration as a matter of photographic right. Victoria's capital insists too much upon



her charms, without making some modest allowance for details. She claims to be among her urban relatives at the antipodes what Niagara is among waterfalls, and the chances are that, in forming your mental pictures of the place as you approach it, you are likely to experience a disappointment when you reach the reality, which a little less laudation would not occasion.

Melbourne is singularly unfortunate in its approach by both rail and sea. To see it without your prejudices being excited, through gasworks and tanneries on the one hand, or the Liffey-life odour of the channel of the Yarra river up which you steer your course from Port Philip on the other, you would have to drop in upon the city in a balloon sailing down from the region of Mount Macedon. Coming upon it in this manner you would be inclined to forgive its professional beauty pretensions on finding a city of such combined magnitude and splendour in so new a country and so far away from Europe. With, however, the gasometers and dumping grounds of North Melbourne in your eye, or the Yarrow in your nose, for a day or two after admiring Collins Street and all the other lions, you will be inclined to suspend judgment a little before singing in a Melbournian key the unlimited praises of the capital.

It is a source of some amusement to an observant traveller to find himself called upon when in Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney to award the palm of beauty and excellence between these rival cities. If you are wise—as of course you will be—you will take time in which to consider your opinion—time enough in which to reach the next point in your journey before making your preference known. This precaution is all the more necessary when the question is addressed to you in Melbourne. Up till then you have not seen Sydney of “our harbour” fame, and this fact gives you sound reason for postponing your decision. In acting the part of Paris between these rival urban goddesses you are apt to have the apple of praise taken from you in behalf of Melbourne by some such trick as Venus played upon her rivals in the classic story. She was careful to take advantage of the youth and inexperience of the impressionable judge by a too liberal exhibition of charms which an older head would have resented as an attempt to carry judgment by assault. You must see all Melbourne—its back as well as its front streets; its sanitary system along with its palace-like Parliament House; its working-class quarters as well as its four or five truly magnificent thoroughfares—before you expend too many superlative adjectives in your wondering admiration. Still, while

counselling all this prudent reserve, I must admit that, taking everything into consideration ; the youth of the capital, the limited population of the colony, and the other-end-of-the-world impression which forces itself upon you in the long voyage from Europe ; you are likely to come to the conclusion before you leave Melbourne that the term "marvellous" is justly earned by the city you find on the banks of the Yarra.

I will make no attempt to describe Melbourne. That would be a task outside the scope and limits of this work. Its Collins, and Burke, and Swanston Streets have been well and duly lauded by every visitor who has recorded his impressions of the city. They are truly magnificent streets, but are wanting in commensurate width, while they possess very little of the ornamentation and shade of trees which add so much to the beauty of better planned cities. Collins Street has scores of palatial banks, representing almost every design of Doric, Corinthian, and Roman architecture, with here and there a rival exhibition of some Venetian style. You wonder how all these banks can find business enough for a city with about the same population as Manchester. You seem to see more banks than are met with in London, while they are certainly handsomer and more costly buildings. The great number of these institutions begets the impression that Australia is, for good or evil, the most be-banked country in the world ; and after walking once or twice along a thoroughfare worthy of "Genova la Superba," you are inclined to think that there are enough of banks in this one street alone to manage the money-changing business of the whole of Australasia.

Burke, and Swanston, and Elizabeth Streets are more devoted to the general wants of the city. All the leading business establishments, hotels, and clubs, are found in or adjacent to these more crowded streets. Flinders Lane is a very narrow but most important centre, and has its warehouses, exchanges, and emporiums on a scale of size and solidity of structure in curious contrast with its limited roadway. The land on which Melbourne stands being almost as valuable round here as that of the City of London, accounts for this ground-rent law of restriction. The owners of the land on which Flinders Lane's mercantile palaces are built have found out, like the same class in London, how to add to their property the value imparted to it by the outlay of other people's money. Not yet sixty years ago a large portion of what is now Collins Street was sold for less money per acre than would now have to be paid per foot in

the same locality. Like their brethren of London, the ground-rent owners of Melbourne have been those most enriched by its wonderful growth and wealth. The poor entity known as the Municipality, or Community, own little of what is technically "its own" land. "The earth is the landlords, and the rent thereof," is clearly the same sacred Anglo-Saxon law of social creation, alike at both ends of the same earth.

You cannot obtain a good or complete view of Melbourne from any point within or immediately without the city unless from the tower of some edifice. It resembles its rival Sydney in this drawback. Coming up by sea from Port Philip offers you a view of Williamstown, its wharves, foundries, and factories to the left, beyond which large ocean steamers cannot proceed. Williamstown is not a thing of beauty, as a suburb, adjunct or annex. Brighton and St. Kilda appear on the right, or east, and come well into view as you near the city, and make you wonder afterwards why Melbourne proper did not start from these more favourable points on the shores of the bay. It was the position of the Yarra which guided the original selection of the city's site, and it was, naturally enough, impossible for Batman and his companions, or whoever determined the matter, to contemplate the uprising of so great a centre of population within the period of a single lifetime.

Melbourne spreads itself over an area of 256 square miles. This, to me, is one of its highest claims to admiration—its glorious expansiveness. It extends almost everywhere. It has no less than fifteen self-governing suburban municipalities, some of them worthy, in buildings, extent, and appearance, to rank as cities in themselves, while all of them possess enough of elbow room to provide little parks, or promenades, or other health-giving breathing space for their respective populations. Two or three of these suburbs are very prettily situated, notably St. Kilda and Brighton; both having enticing sea prospects combined with the calm and comfort of a country side. Melbourne's plutocracy live in these districts, and in Prahan and Toorak; Society having marked them by its wealth and mansions as its own. They have evidently spared no money to provide themselves with palatial homes, many of which in style, and size, and accessories will well compare with the "stately halls" of England.

Looked at from the top of some building that stands on the higher elevations of the city, it presents a wonderful panorama of church spires, towering public edifices, fine mansions, manufactories, and factory chimneys. All the various suburban

municipalities, too, have tried to follow more or less the parent city's ambitious tastes in architecture, and you mark any number of stately town halls all over the smoky limits of the capital. The Melbourne City Hall is badly situated on the low level of Swanston street, and loses the effect which its combination of Renaissance and older classic style, and Corinthian columns with a commanding belfry, would give to it if it had been built on a level with the Parliament House, St. Patrick's Cathedral, or on some other elevated site.

The Catholic cathedral is the finest as well as largest ecclesiastical edifice in the southern hemisphere. It stands upon a site of unique advantage, and forms the most striking object in the whole of Melbourne's display of noble church structures. Its style is mixed, but it follows pretty generally that known as the English Gothic or geometric decorated of the fourteenth century. The body of the edifice is in an ugly blue stone, relieved, however, by the lighter freestone dressings, which help to redeem the dark colour of the other stone. It is exceedingly rich and imposing in design as in external finish, and when fully completed and crowned with its triple spires, will rank as one of the great and beautiful churches of the world. Internally the aspect is majestic but simple, and, excepting some richly decorated windows, is free from obtrusive ornamentations. The stone used in the body of the building was an unfortunate selection, giving to so noble a temple a somewhat sombre hue more suited to a place of sepulture than a place of worship. Had St. Patrick's been favoured with stone as bright as most of the Collins street banks can boast of, it would more than ever form the crowning glory of Melbourne's magnificent display of sacred buildings. The cost of the church has been, I believe, upwards of £200,000, and is practically free from debt, owing to the generosity of the catholics of the city and the great and well-merited popularity of Archbishop Carr, to whom nothing can be denied by his admiring archdiocese.

The municipal government of Melbourne follows the English model; the mayor being elected by the aldermen and city councillors. These are elected on a property or rateable franchise from seven wards; one alderman and three councillors representing each ward. The annual rateable value of property in Melbourne and its suburbs was claimed to be close upon £6,000,000 in 1893, before the Bank-Land "boom."



## CHAPTER XXII.

### AUSTRALIANS AT HOME

AS Melbourne boasts of being the centre and reflex of Australian life (claiming, as it does, the possession of the leading University and the most noted racecourse of the colonies), this may be an appropriate point in our itinerary at which to consider how far the life and progress, laws and institutions of the antipodes are an improvement, or otherwise, upon the state of things in Great Britain and Ireland. First, as to the people whom you meet in the Australias. Here, undoubtedly, there is a marked advance for the better, so far as physique is concerned, and in both sexes too. I would go so far as to say that the Australian, born of British or Irish parents, is the best physically developed man of either of these races. This will, I think, be acknowledged by all who have travelled in the colonies, and by those who saw the Australian contingents in London during the "jubilee" celebration of this year. The dry and healthful climate; the influence upon the atmosphere of the limitless eucalypti forests, over which the winds are eternally blowing; the outdoor life and labour of those who live and work beyond the confines of the very few large cities, and are engaged in agricultural, pastoral, and mining industries; all go, I think, to explain the vigorous frame, manliness of bearing, and stamp of independence characteristic of the average Australian.

Then there are two more very important factors engaged in the building up of the physical manhood of the "native sons" of these favoured lands. The Australians are the best-fed people in the world. There is more of the best food and of the ordinary luxuries of life consumed by them than by any others, not excepting those of the United States. Mulhall has given a most useful tabulated comparison in his all-embracing statistics, showing the estimated relative annual amounts expended on living in most of the civilized countries of the world. He places Australasia at the head of the list with an annual yearly individual

budget of £43 12s. 10d., the United States (with £32 16s. 2d.) and Great Britain (with £29 14s. 9d.) following a long way after. It must not be inferred from these figures that Australia may be highest in its expenditure of living owing to comparative dearness there of the necessaries of life. Animal food and some other necessaries are cheaper at the antipodes than in any part of the English-speaking world. It is calculated that no more than 33 per cent. of the average earnings of the people go to provide the needs of Australian existence, as against an estimated 40 per cent. within Great Britain and Ireland. The United States comes ahead of Australia in this respect, the percentage there being but 25 per cent. of income for the wants of livelihood. But, as I have observed before (and I speak from a wider experience of America than of Australia), the people of the colonies live better; that is, they give themselves more "creature comforts" than even the well-fed and well-cared-for citizens of the United States.

Rent and clothing account for more of a worker's wages in Australia than in Great Britain, but are for a similar reason about on a par with what these items cost across the Atlantic. "Protection," worshipped as an economic idol equally in Australia as America, accounts for this alike in both countries. Tariff duties explain the high price of clothing material and other necessaries, and wherever prices are high it is certain that rent will go high too; the landlord of houses and land will take good care of that. He is not a "protectionist" on altruistic principles, either in Ireland or in Victoria. He may possibly plead a patriotic inspiration for his economic creed in Melbourne, but he is honest enough not to put forth a similar explanation in Mayo. "Protection" to him means the highest rents and the least arrears out of workers' earnings, and as he has, at least in Ireland, succeeded in practically absorbing all the spare earnings of his tenant for the more sacred ends of rent, he is now, like his English rental relative, a strong advocate of the "protection" which will enable him to screw something more out of the general public by way of duties on imported necessaries.

There are several other reasons which tend to explain the superior physique of the Australian over the European or American. They work less hours at the other end of the world than we do, less per day, and less days in the year, too. Women and children, to their countries' credit be it recorded, are not employed to the extent in which factory and similar life give occupations injurious to health in some of these older countries.



Sports and outdoor pastimes are also far more indulged in than with us. So that when we add to these more helpful conditions in the building up of a vigorous race of people, the hereditary influence begotten of the courage, enterprise, and strength of body and will which must have distinguished the types of men and women from Europe who laid the foundations of new Anglo-Saxon and new Celtic races under Australian skies a generation back, we are able to understand why the "native sons" of such parents excel their distant kindred in strength, health, and physique.

The Australian women bear the stamp of climatic influence as do all their sex. The climate is trying to do for the daughters of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales out there what blood and climate combined have done for the women of Spain and Italy. Complexions may not be as fair nor cheeks as rosy as those you see at Punchestown or the Oaks, but the face is equally as handsome, while the build is finer and firmer, and gives hope of a more vigorous offspring.

At Randwick races in Sydney the fair spectators would, at least, equal in face and figure, animation, taste in dress, and general attractiveness those of any similar gathering we are familiar with in these older lands. Someone has said that Australian men and women are "Antipodean Americans." I would say yes and no: yes, as to strong individuality, independence, self-reliance, and "go"; but no, in respect of the restless worry and spendthrift energies which are peculiar to American character in all its wealth-hunting traits and habits. The Australian is an American, plus sports, holidays, less work and worry, and with the health-giving aid of what I may call the eucalyptic atmosphere of the forest continent of the antipodes.

Some comment of an uncomplimentary kind upon the drinking habits of the colonists was made a short time back by a late visitor to Australia. Having read what this gentleman had written before I reached the country, I made it a special duty to look for a confirmation or disproof of this allegation during my tour. I had, I think, equal opportunities for forming a correct judgment in this respect to those of the author referred to. My experience embraced public meetings in over sixty of the largest centres of population; four or five each being held in Melbourne and Sydney. I travelled over seven thousand miles in the seven colonies, on rail, river, coach, and sea. Then I was present at races, football matches, excursions, and Labour

demonstrations. My observations also covered special visits to all the chief gold-mining camps in the colonies, as well as to a leading prison in each colony. I remained a relatively long time in the largest cities, and took steps to compare the drinking habits of the citizens with what one knows about the similar indulgence of the populace in the large centres of industrial life in Great Britain and Ireland. Putting all these experiences and tests together, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that there is far less drunkenness in Australasia than in Great Britain in proportion to population. In the seventy-two meetings I addressed I saw only six people under the influence of liquor ; that is, six in a total of seventy thousand. No human being can have a greater dread of a temporary punishment of any kind than I have of a drunken person in an audience I have to address, and that is one reason why I can fix with certainty upon the number given of those who excited my apprehensive horror by inebriate interruption. Anyone familiar with public gatherings in Great Britain and Ireland will know how small a percentage this would mean among a similar number of audiences and an equal number of people in the older countries.

I was present at Randwick races, Sydney, when the "Derby" was run. I walked all over the place to observe the people. I saw a good deal of drinking, but not a single case of intoxication through the whole day. I have referred in my impressions of Perth to a large Labour demonstration in that city, and to the circumstance that eight thousand working men, with their wives and families, took part in a kind of picnic gathering, with refreshments of all kinds available, without a single drunken person being seen on the grounds. On the goldfields, especially at Mount Morgan and Coolgardie, I saw an enormous quantity of drink consumed. But mining camps are not at all a fair standard of comparison for the whole of Australia or for any other country. I would say that drinking in private houses, especially the consumption of whisky, would be above the average compared with a similar practice in the old countries. But the high standard of living and the exceptional dryness of the atmosphere help to make a capacity for absorbing liquids, which largely counteracts the intoxicating evils of alcoholic drinks and minimises their effects.

Finally, statistics disprove the statement which has called for these observations, and in estimating the value of such testimony in this instance it is well to bear in mind the much larger proportion of male over female population in these antipodean

countries. It has been shown conclusively by figures, which give the relative annual consumption of intoxicating spirits per head of population in Great Britain and Ireland and in Australasia, that there is at least 25 per cent. of a lower average consumption in the latter countries. Against all this there stands the testimony of the writer alluded to. I think it can be safely said that whatever foundation there may be in the author's mind for this assertion, it is not one based upon either facts or careful observation. To take a case of drunkenness at a club or public dinner, on a steamboat, in a train, in a tram, and theatre, at a few meetings, and in one or two private homes, and then sum up all these, and retail them as evidence of an almost universal habit of intoxication, is stupidly unfair. One can find these instances anywhere and everywhere by trying to do so, just as thieving or scarlatina or other evils can be discovered by the necessary efforts to look up police courts and hospitals in a city at home or abroad. But to argue from such every-day instances of social life in every country that thieving and scarlatina must be the normal moral and sanitary state of all its people would be the contention of a mere sensation-monger or a fool.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CULTURE AND EDUCATION

A GENERAL test of a country's progress in education and culture is not easy to find and apply as a standard of comparison by a traveller. We are told by Dr. Nordau that certain kinds of culture are symptomatic of degeneracy. Education being an essential part of culture, and culture being, it is said, the highest work of civilization, a travelling Englishman who found fault with the ornamentation of the Post Office at Sydney, voted the whole Australian people to be sadly wanting in the higher civilization which grows out of universities, especially Oxford and Cambridge. Mark Twain described a cauliflower as "a cabbage with a college education." The Australians have invented a name for a university or college-bred Englishman with plenty of "culture" but no cauliflower—a "Jackeroo." All "Jackeroos" do not stay in Australia, though many do. Those who return "home" excuse the failure occasioned by their useless manhood by criticising the want of refinement which obtains in everybody and everything at the antipodes. As Whittier expresses it—

"Rebuking with their cultured phrase  
The homeliness of words and ways"

which do not bear the stamp of an Oxford or Cambridge bringing-up. Refinement or culture may be a very relative personal quality. I once overheard the "boots" in a Neapolitan hotel speak of a guest, who belonged to an English noble family and had a distinguished Varsity career, as "a man with the manners of a calf." An average Frenchman, if asked for his opinion on the breeding or culture of an English tourist, would probably be less complimentary to the British nation than the cultured "Jackeroo" is to the people of Australia. It all depends on the standard of comparison.

Speaking of the Australian people as I observed them—in their universities, colleges, and schools; in their homes; in their



conversation and general demeanour; their information and intelligence; in the relatively large number of their newspapers; and in their manifest zeal for the intellectual development of their children—I would say that they favourably compare in general educational equipment and average culture with similar populations in any part of the English-speaking world. Oxfords and Cambridges are not the growth of fifty years, nor are the picture galleries and art collections of Europe the æsthetic labour of a generation; and to twit the colonists with a want of refinement and culture that universities are alleged alone to provide is only a piece of uncultured priggery, if one can be pardoned for trying to coin an ugly phrase to describe an uglier critical entity.

Considering all the facts, the Australias have made most creditable progress in education. Four of the colonies, Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, and New Zealand, have each a university, and one and all of these institutions are well supported out of state funds and endowments, and attract a comparatively large number of students. They are adapted to the needs and ideas of the countries they serve, and can well stand a test of comparison in the results of their training with institutions of a similar age in older countries. The needs of secondary education are well provided for in most of the colonies, particularly in the two oldest—New South Wales and Victoria. Technical colleges are found in all the large towns, with branches extending to smaller centres. Then there are the schools of arts, mines, and design in every chief town of every industrial district, which attest to the care and provision of the people for the practical as well as the intellectually ornamental in the training-up of their offsprings.

In primary education progress has been most marked during the past twenty years, judging from the increase of schools and the decrease in the number of illiterates. The state schools are all secular in their teaching. In four out of the seven colonies, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and New Zealand, it is free and compulsory. The other colonies still retain the mixed-fee and state-aided system, though no child is really debarred by want of means from attending the public schools in either Western Australia or Tasmania. These schools are not as well built or as well adapted for their purpose in internal arrangements as the public schools of the United States. They correspond in these respects with the backwardness of the earlier buildings erected under the Act of 1870 in England, but,

as in the case of later-built schools in Great Britain, those more recently erected in the colonies show a marked advance upon the contracted notions which influenced the planning and internal arrangement of schools twenty years ago.

The secular teaching in Australian public schools begets the same contest with the denominational principle as in the old countries. The Catholics will have nothing to do with the state schools, and are supporting their own denominational system. This necessarily entails the hardship of having to provide for the educational wants of their children while contributing their share, as general taxpayers, towards the public instruction of the children of their neighbours. There is, however, no special school rate levied to accentuate feeling on this matter, as under the English Act of 1870; and the grievance of the Catholics is therefore not so irritating as a direct demand for rates in which they are not to share would make it. The Catholic schools are, as a rule, poorly equipped in comparison with the public schools. Unlike what obtains in Great Britain and Ireland, no assistance of any kind is given out of public funds towards the voluntary system in Australia. Such schools have therefore to be built, maintained, managed, and officered out of the contributions by Catholics and other denominationalists, and this necessarily handicaps them in relative efficiency and competition with the state schools.

I visited a large number of the Catholic schools in my tour, and found them, as a rule, but not in all instances, in the capable hands of teaching orders, and more than holding their own in the educational race with the schools of the state. Here is where Catholics have a great advantage over other denominations, and over the state as well, which, to some extent, offers compensation for the denial of government support. The Christian Brothers and Nuns are teachers not for salaries, but for higher considerations. They bring self-denying zeal and the energy of enthusiasm to their work, and are stimulated in the noble task of instructing youth by the taunts of those who think, or seem to do so, that education and Catholicism are mutually antagonistic. I will offer no opinion on the question of higher education, but in the tuition and training of children the ideal teacher is the Catholic Nun; and familiar as I am with convent schools in many parts of the world, I have never found better teachers or happier-looking children at school than it was my privilege to find in each of the Australian colonies.

Ireland owes these Sisters an everlasting debt of gratitude. They not only impart to the children, mostly of Irish parents, a



sound, practical education; they instil into their minds a love of the fatherland of their parents which will ensure a kindly and lasting link of sympathy between the "old land" and its sons and daughters at the farthest end of the earth. In the wildest districts of New Zealand, or the remotest gold-mining camps of Queensland, I have listened to convent school children sweetly singing some of Moore's melodies, or one of Thomas Davis's patriotic songs. I have one of these scenes before me as I look over the notes of my stay in Charters Towers, almost two thousand miles north of Sydney. It is a school with about 500 children, many of them being the children of non-Catholic mining parents. They ranged in age from delightful little tots of three up to girls of fifteen—all comfortably dressed, healthy, bright, and happy. The rendering by a child of five or six of "Come Back to Erin," and a joint singing of "The Wearing of the Green" by the whole school, made one feel that a country and a cause which could inspire all this, at a distance of some seventeen thousand miles away from Ireland, were destined to reap some day the reward of such a unique and deathless devotion of the scattered Celtic race to the freedom of its parent-land.

It is as curious as it is instructive to find a ruling Democracy almost everywhere pitting itself against the teaching of religion in state schools. In France and America, where equality and fraternity are claimed to be the principles of Republican freedom; in England, where Democracy rules, more or less; in Australia, where Democracy is omnipotent, the same hostile sentiment prevails (not of course universally in England)—"away with the teaching of religion out of public schools." And yet the idea of individual equality—the germ of that principle which stands for popular enfranchisement—was born of the teaching which held the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man as the evangel with which the world was to be won from the slavery of caste and paganism to the rule of the *vox populi!* It has been well remarked by the late Emile de Laveleye how inconsistent it is on the part of ultra-Democrats to fiercely attack religion, which inculcates equality, and to embrace, in preference, the Darwinian propositions which are based upon just the opposite foundation—the dogma of the survival of the fittest—the creed of the strong and the unscrupulous!

Doubtless this antagonism is due to the policy rather than to the teaching of the Church, which too long and too readily allied itself to the cause of classes and dynasties, and thereby

invited the jealous fears or open hostility of modern Democracy. It might, however, be asserted with tolerable historic warrant that as between the worldly blindness of the Church just before the French Revolution and the criminal blindness of the people who established a reign of bloodshed rather than of brotherhood on the ruins of the old order, there was not much to choose in the matter of political wisdom. Apart from historic or other consideration, Democracy is throwing away a powerful ally in the needless contest it is waging against religion. Putting it upon the low level of a moral police influence, states that are to be ruled by and for the people will need, as all civilized governments and countries require, the restraint upon personal licence, the spiritual elevation over mere animalism in man and woman, that belongs essentially to religion to teach or to inculcate, and which no degree of a mere intellectual materialism can or will alone ever give to a human nature whose passions and impulses must always incline to a warfare with the moral law.

The problem of how to reconcile the conflicting interests of secular and religious teaching with state rights in the education of the people is not a simple or a single one, and does not concern these touring sketches of Australian institutions. Still, the friction which exists in more countries than one to-day over this question causes more injury to the interests of true Democracy, as I humbly apprehend it, than harm to the Churches. What seems to give this friction most of its activity is a want on both sides of a just recognition of the rights involved in the question of primary education. That the state which is expected to pay for popular education should have the right to control and direct its purely secular interests is, or ought to be, as unquestioned, in common sense and reason, as the right of the parent of a child to select whether it shall have, with such an education, a religious or a non-sectarian tuition. The difficulty in countries where there are many religious creeds and much anti-religious feeling is how to reconcile two such fundamental rights with what will be best for the all-round welfare of the national education of the people. In countries governed on constitutional principles the state must mean government by majority, which, in turn, might mean education according to the ideas and principles of one half of the nation, plus a few more to make the necessary majority required to rule the rest. This is where the trouble comes in. Democracy is all right until it forgets, like other governing forces, that minorities have equity on their side, even though not possessing the neces-

sary ruling right of the majority. To rule by majority and govern by equity would be ideal Democracy, and there is no solid reason why the commonest notions of equity applied to the task, in countries of mixed creeds, should not remove the friction now existing between religious and secular principles in the education of the people, which, in the long run, will do more damage to the ruling power of Democracy than to the spiritual power of the Churches.

A common form of Christian instruction will not do. It solves no difficulty. The Catholic and the Episcopalian and the Jew will not agree to this, neither will the agnostic nor the atheist—all equal in the eye of the state in the matter of educational rights and civic and political liberties. No religious teaching of any kind, is the American remedy. This is, however, the secularist remedy, and it leaves the rival claims of the pro-religious community unsatisfied. It offers no final or satisfactory solution where Churches are growing in number and influence, and where demands for denominationalism are becoming louder and louder.

The remedy lies, in my humble opinion, in some such compromise as that which has practically helped the Canadians out of their educational troubles: free education, in the full meaning of the term—freedom for the citizen to have his child educated by the state and taught the faith of his Church, be that church what it may.

Here there is no wrong done to any section of the people, and no right denied; and, surely, there ought to be nothing inconsistent with real Democracy in treating the claims of the people—be they but a section or be they a few short of a ruling majority—for the religious teaching of their children on the most elementary principles of the commonest justice and of undeniable equity; apart altogether from the wisdom and expediency of stopping a warfare waged over a religious grievance in the state.

A movement is at present on foot in Victoria, and has taken shape in the Legislature, to add to the purely secularist character of the teaching in the public schools those scriptural lessons from the Irish National School system which fed a very angry controversy in Ireland years ago. A bill is at present under consideration which proposes to subject to a referendum of the electors the question whether such a step shall or shall not be taken. The plebiscite when taken (if the bill becomes law) must be on the one-man-one-vote franchise, with penalties against duplicate voting. The eighth clause of the bill declares: "If the votes recorded in favour of the use of the said lessons books

amount to one half of the total number of votes recorded, then it shall be the duty of the Minister of Public Instruction forthwith to take all such steps as may be necessary for ensuring the use of such books in each and every state school, and for the instruction of all children attending schools in the lessons set forth in such books, and such instruction shall be given in the time set apart during each school day for secular instruction."

This measure, if it becomes an Act, will virtually dethrone the secularist principle in the Victorian schools and make Bible-teaching compulsory. Safeguards are, of course, invented against infringing upon the rights of conscience, both in regard to teachers and pupils. It is provided "that no teacher who states in writing, addressed to the Minister of Public Instruction, that he objects on conscientious grounds to give such instruction shall be required to teach such lessons." The rights of parents in the religious training of their children are equally safeguarded. It is provided, "That if a parent of any child, by notice in writing to the head teacher of the school which such child attends, objects to such instruction, such child shall not be permitted or required to attend the teaching of such lessons."



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### COLONIAL FEDERATION

I FOUND little or no feeling in any of the colonies in behalf of Imperial Federation. The Premier of New South Wales gave blunt but expressive voice to this Australasian indifference when in London this year, in the remark that "they had no intention of becoming a joint in the Imperial tail." Such a union with the Imperial system could only be cemented on a basis which would demand an Australian contribution towards general Imperial expenses, and a direct tax of a farthing in the pound for such purpose would be as much resented in the colonies as was the historic Tea Tax, which linked Boston Harbour with the creation of the United States Republic.

This by no means implies the existence of any want of "loyalty" on the part of Australians towards the centre of the empire. It might almost be said they are rather theatrically "loyal" in nearly all the colonies, only you must not tax the sentiment in any way. On the contrary, its existence is conditional upon your allowing them to tax anything coming from England which may compete with Australian production. In other words, Australian loyalty costs nothing. It is about the only article England is allowed to send in free along with her governors.

There is, however, the general feeling that these far-off countries with their sparse populations are protected by Imperial force and prestige, and any real danger which might assail the source of this safeguarding influence would call for and receive responsive sympathy and support from almost all Australasians.

I found my countrymen, as a rule, sharers in this general sentiment of Australian attachment to the empire. I noticed in many houses I entered in my tour, particularly those of Catholic clergymen, the picture of the Queen; but almost always flanked by that of Mr. Gladstone, and, not unfrequently, by either Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, or Mr. William O'Brien—a some-

what incongruous association. On almost all public or semi-public occasions they likewise drink Her Majesty's health. This practice appears strange to a Nationalist visitor from Ireland, but it was explained to me on one occasion in the only "snub" I think I received during my whole tour. I chanced to be in a city which is remarkable for its celebration of Royal birthdays. I wanted some postage stamps, and wended my way to the post office, which I found closed. "What is the matter with the post office?" I inquired of a fellow-countryman standing near. "This is the Duke of Edinburgh's birthday, and all public offices and places of business are closed." "But," I ventured to object, "this would not happen even in England. I presume if it was known on what day His Royal Highness's nurse was born you would make that a general holiday too, here in ——." The reply was as neat as it was instant and direct: "We are blessed here, sir, with the freest kind of Home Rule, and we are free, I hope, to be loyal if we like, which we do." I got no postage stamps that day.

The movement for Colonial Federation does not in any sense represent a strong popular demand in any single colony; in fact, I have heard many noted public advocates of it say in private they knew it would not be realized for a dozen or more years to come. It is largely a Press agitation, or rather a combined lawyer and Press-made movement with no public enthusiasm at its back. I found the Labour parties talking rather disparagingly of it, and I do not think they are likely to exert their influence in behalf of the proposal when it is finally submitted to a referendum of the people. It will fail in my opinion to receive the necessary popular endorsement.

Federation at present would complicate matters very much in almost every colony, though in bringing about, as it must when adopted, inter-colonial Free Trade, it would get rid of the tariff barriers that separate the countries at present, and put them on a similar footing towards each other to that existing between the various states of the American Union. New South Wales is practically a Free Trade colony now. If Federation is effected she will have to become Protectionist, like her sister colonies, in her trading connections with countries outside the Australian Union and towards New Zealand, which stands for the present outside the Federation scheme, and towards Queensland, which is unlikely to adopt the scheme, even if accepted by her Legislature, which is doubtful. Should Queensland and Western Australia stand aloof from the Federal Convention, which meets



again next month in Melbourne, the probability is that the efforts at Federation will be arrested for some years to come.

It offers no obvious benefit to the working classes of Australia. It will add nothing to the present advantages they possess in colonies where the Labour parties hold the balance of Parliamentary power. On the contrary, it is feared, and with some justification, that a Federal Parliament, for want of something really Australian to do—limited as it will be in the extent and scope of its domestic powers—will bring friction and trouble into the life of individual colonies by mixing and meddling in external and Imperial matters. The giving over of the postal and telegraph service and of customs duties, and probably railways, would take from the civil servants of each colony the security they feel at present, and place them at the mercy of a central authority in some city remote from their ken and influence. These men will not vote for Federation, nor will working men generally, at least for the present. The changes effected in many of the colonies during the past ten years towards a real and an effective democracy, the uprise and present influence of Labour power in the Legislatures, and the gradual growth of a national sentiment out of a mere "Colonial" feeling, all call for a longer lease of progress and more opportunities for a fuller and more complete development in the life of each state before Federation will become the needed complement of colonial evolution.

There are champions of Federalism outside the ranks of its Melbourne and Sydney supporters, but they are chiefly found in one or two small cities which lay claim to having been certified by geographical position, or the special character of their citizens' patriotism, as alone qualified to become the Washington of the Antipodean Commonwealth. Albury, a prettily situated town on the borders of New South Wales and Victoria, is one ardent applicant for the honour; while Bathurst, in the same colony, but not so near to Victoria or with such picturesque surroundings, is another. There are several other aspirants as well. The draft bill to constitute "the Commonwealth of Australia" says: "The seat of Government of the Commonwealth shall be determined by the Parliament," and as the Parliament has first to be created, and is not yet, the rival claimants to the future seat of Federal government are booming their respective qualifications well in advance of time and the event.

Victoria and New South Wales will have the power to determine this question in the Federal Legislature. At the rate of one

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member of the House of Representatives for every 30,000 people, the two most populous colonies will have about eighty members in the popular House, as against about half that number for the remaining four; New Zealand wisely remaining for the present outside the proposed Federal spider's parlour. In the Senate the four colonies with least people will have thirty-two out of the total of forty-eight senators, at the ratio of eight for each colony irrespective of population. In a joint vote of both Houses upon any disputed matter Victoria and New South Wales will, however, have a clear majority of thirty over their six sister colonies combined. It is in this fact that Albury may centre some of its hopes. It lies distant about 200 miles from Melbourne and 390 from Sydney, and if this circumstance will outweigh the claims of all other cities and considerations the matter is virtually settled, and Albury's dream of becoming a future Washington on the banks of the Murray will look like business.

It is unlikely, however, that this comparatively unimportant circumstance will weigh in the scale for Albury's good fortune. Other considerations of a higher nature for the future of the Federal Commonwealth will influence the decision. The Federal capital is almost certain to be a seaport, and if Melbourne and Sydney cannot agree as to which should have the prize it is not unlikely that Hobart would be acceptable as a compromise. That city, in view of New Zealand's probable ultimate union with the Federal States when established, would be a fairly central situation for the capital of Australasia, and a most beautiful capital it would make with its superb situation of landscape beauty and deep sea facilities, and natural adaptiveness for strong defence at the mouth of the Derwent. The city and some adjacent country could be "neutralized," like the district of Columbia in which Washington is situated, and the capital of Tasmania could be removed to Launceston. This plan is believed by many, outside of Albury and Bathurst, to be the most convenient as well as the least all-round objectionable one, as it would fix the seat of the Federal government in the smallest of the existing colonies, and would thus excite the least jealousy among the larger rival aspirants.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### SOME ANECDOTES

THE Mayors of Australian towns and cities are in some matters a badly treated class of public benefactors. They are shorn of some of the ordinary privileges of their fellow-citizens while serving the community. The right to keep away from a meeting or lecture or other dismal occasion ought to be as fully and freely recognized in all citizens as the right to hold or attend any similar gathering. This right is denied to an Australian mayor. He is compelled by an unwritten municipal law not only to be present, but to preside at all functions of this kind and character, under pain of giving offence to some section of his mayoral subjects for the time being. Some courageous mayors rebelled against this tyranny during my lecture tour, and they commanded my respectful homage for the successful assertion of their courage and rights. Others more complacent submitted themselves to the ordeal of listening to sentiments and opinions which they probably held in abhorrence, and thus gave way to the decree of mayoral servitude involved in their acceptance of the honour of chief magistrate. Occasionally such victims had their revenge. In a pretty and prosperous little town in one of the colonies it fell to the lot of an Orangeman from the north of Ireland, who happened to be mayor, to be my chairman and to introduce me in a lecture upon Home Rule. He acquitted himself admirably in delivering the following speech, which I took down verbatim as he spoke:—

“Gentlemen and ladies,—I am happy to stand afront of this meeting and to see so many dacent people present. (Laughter.) We are here for a lecture by this gentleman, and he is a larned gentleman because he has a bald head like myself. (Roars of laughter.) Be quiet now, ye are not in the bush. (Laughter.) Of course, I won't agree with what the gentleman will say (laughter), but I respect him because I am the mayor of —, the best town in —. (Loud cheers.) Ye don't want me to spake more, so I have to thank ye for yeer good manners, and I ask the gentleman to step to the front and say his lecture. (Cheers.)”

In another town in another colony a world-wide advocate of Bimetallism volunteered to speak upon that problem, and the mayor was, of course, compelled by custom to preside. The lecturer, as is his wont, appeared in faultless evening dress. The chief magistrate, a born Radical Cockney, did not. In opening the proceedings, the mayor, who had allowed the distinguished stranger's name to slip his memory, spoke as follows:—

“Ladies and gentlemen,—I don't know nothink about this ere Bi-metallism, but there is a *Bloke here from Great Britain* as will soon tell you all about it.”

The record declareth that the speech which followed was not the happiest that the “*Bloke from Great Britain*” had up till then delivered in his long-time advocacy of a subject which he has made his own.

Another mayor of a far more important city chanced to be chief magistrate when a London Gaiety Company happened to visit the place. The head of the city was a very prominent member of the Wesleyan body, a paterfamilias of social standing, and above all the shafts of club or smoke-room gossip in personal and public propriety. He was waited upon by some of the youth of—, which place had simply gone mad on the bewitching Gaiety Girls, and asked to give them an informal reception at the Town Hall. The proposal took his worship's breath away, but with what was left he gasped out a sternly-righteous refusal as guardian of the municipal reputation, courageously bowed the gallant deputation out of his parlour, went home, and, like a hero safe from a field of dangerous encounter, related the incident to the first lady of the city.

The following day there arrived at — the mayor of a rival city, who, as a matter of municipal etiquette, called to pay his respects to his worship of —. Now the city of — has a famous organ, one of the lions of the place, which is in the Town Hall, and the visited mayor asked the mayor visitor to see and hear the noted instrument. This was done, and after the musical programme was got through the dispenser of municipal hospitality invited his brother mayor to a little refreshment in the mayor's parlour. At this precise juncture, as a cruel fate would have it, who should chance to come in, attracted when passing by the pealing of the organ, but the Gaiety Girls, who were doing the lions of the city under the guidance of an admiring escort. The door of the mayor's parlour was open, champagne bottles were seen on the table, and in rushed the irrepressible band



of roaming beauties to pay their respects to the mayor! The story goes that the visiting mayor was a young man and not insensible to such charms as flooded the parlour with their profusion, so he proposed as a toast "The Mayor of — *and his guests*, the charming ladies of the Gaiety Company." More champagne became necessary, and the mayoral victim of the law of Australian hospitality, finding himself in the hands of the fair Philistines, had more bottles brought in, and dispensed the courtesies of the occasion with the best grace possible.

The following morning the papers of — announced in something like the following terms, that "His worship the Mayor, always responsive to the city's hospitable feeling had, as his guests, in the Parlour of the Town Hall on yesterday afternoon, the lady members of the Gaiety Company, who have completely captured the town with their singing, skirt dancing, and high kicking. The Mayor of —, who is also visiting our city, was present, and in a complimentary speech proposed the health of the Mayor and his charming company. Corks popped and glasses clinked, and full honours were done to the toast by all those privileged to take part in such an agreeable function." It is said that the explanations which were subsequently demanded from His Worship from two quarters; one domestic and the other religious; upon this occurrence and report, were not conspicuous for a clear proof of that innocence which is never more difficult to establish than when accused by circumstantial evidence only.

The police of Australia, like those of America, are recruited in a large measure from the ranks of Irish colonists. This seeming weakness for the service of preserving the peace has not escaped comment at the hands of critics not too generously disposed in sympathy towards the Celtic race. Jokes at "Paddy the Policeman" are always found in the comic papers, and bulls and blunders are manufactured for him in the most approved cockney manner by those jackeroo journalists who condescend to remain in Australia. The Irish policeman has established a good record for himself, nevertheless, in each of the colonies, and is more frequently a well-informed output from a National School in Ireland, than the un-Celtic creation he is represented to be by disparaging writers. It is related that an Englishman in Sydney, meeting an unmistakable son of Ireland in a policeman's uniform, flippantly asked him how it was that the most anti-law and order people in the British Empire, when at home, had such a fondness for employment in upholding law outside

their own country? "Because," was the instant reply, "it is a matter of clear duty in both cases—to oppose bad laws in Ireland and defend good ones in Australia."

Prejudice, like virtue, is not a monopoly of any class or country, and true stories are told of Irish policemen, which show them inclined occasionally to mix up racial antipathies with their ideas of preserving the peace. One of these well-founded stories relates to an otherwise highly-esteemed policeman, who, like all his countrymen, sympathized keenly with France in the war of 1870. Shortly after that disastrous conflict it was noticed in the town in which his sphere of duty lay that the officer was frequently summoning German settlers for furious driving. His beat lay on and near a bridge across which farmers and others outside the town had to travel when coming to market or other business.

Among the best and most peaceable of the settlers just beyond the municipal boundaries were a few dozen hard-working and prospering Teutons. One by one these astonished Germans were hauled up at a particular court in which a magistrate sat on certain days, who had himself been knocked down on one occasion by a galloping waggoner and severely hurt. The policeman's story was always the same: "The pris'ner, Your Worship, was driving furiously over the bridge when crowded, to the danger of foot-passengers and others." The accused would vociferate their innocence in the most energetic German, to only find themselves lectured in reply upon the danger to the public of furious driving. The officer's word could not be doubted. Had not His Honour himself had a most painful experience of this reckless practice, which must be put down?—"one pound and costs." Finally, however, a well-known old settler with a horse incapable of even running was pounced upon by the policeman, and the case was dismissed. It was also resolved to send the officer to another beat, whereupon he was overheard to say, "No matter! *Begob, I had my revinge for Sedan, anyhow!*"

The question of which people, English or Irish, were most addicted to corrupt practices at elections in the "old times," having cropped up among friends in a discussion during the general election in New South Wales in 1895, the two following agents' bills were adduced as evidence in the case. The verdict was in favour of the Irish side. The first bill relates to a contest which occurred in the West of England about sixty years ago, and is as follows:—



	£	s.	d.
" For scores of huzza-men . . . . .	40	0	0
For roars of the word 'Church' . . . . .	40	0	0
For several gallons of Tory punch . . . . .	30	0	0
For clubs and brandy bottles . . . . .	20	0	0
For coffee-house praters . . . . .	10	0	0
For Dissenters' dinners . . . . .	40	0	0
For committing two riots . . . . .	200	0	0
For a dozen of perjury-men . . . . .	100	0	0
For a set of notorious liars . . . . .	50	0	0
For Pot-ale . . . . .	100	0	0"

This bill was, doubtless, a burlesque of the methods of the time, but under the guise of a caricature it exposed the real practices employed in elections by the aristocracy, when they had a monopoly of the House of Commons. In the same interesting volume\* *Punch* is quoted from, denouncing corruption at elections in these lines:—

" See from the Treasury flows the gold  
To show that those who 're bought are sold!  
Come, Perjury, meet it on the road—  
'T is all your own—a waggon-load.  
Ye party fools, ye courtier tribe,  
Who gain no vote without a bribe,  
Lavishly kind, yet insincere,  
Behold in *Punch* yourselves appear !"

The following election bill is a genuine document, and relates to a contest fought in Co. Meath about the same period. One Sir Mark Somerville sent orders to the proprietor of an hotel at Trim to board and lodge all the electors who went there prepared to vote for his candidature. The original of the bill was framed and hung in Somerville House, Co. Meath. The document reads:—

" My Bill,

" To Tenting 16 Freeholders above stairs for Sir Mark at 3/3 a head, is to me . . . . .	£	s.	d.
	2	12	0
To Eating 16 more below stairs, and two Priests after supper, is to me . . . . .	2	15	9
To 18 Horses and 5 Mules about my Yard all night, at 13/- every one of them, and for a man which was lost on the head of watching them all night, is to me . . . . .	5	5	0
To 6 Beds in one Room, and 4 in another, at 2 Guineas every Bed, and not more than 4 in any Bed, at any time, cheap enough, God knows, is to me . . . . .	22	15	0
For Breakfast on Tay in the morning for every one of them, and as many more as they brought in, as near as I can guess, is to me . . . . .	4	12	2

\* *History of Parliamentary Elections*, London, 1892.

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To Raw Whisky and Punch, without talking of Pipes and Tobacco, as well as for breaking a pot above stairs, and other Glasses and Delph for the first day and night, I am not very sure, but for the 3 days and a half of the Election as little as I can call it, and to be very exact, it is in all or thereabouts as near as I can guess, and not to be too particular, is to me at least	6   .   .
For Shaving and Cropping off the heads of 49 Freeholders for Sir Mark at 13d. for every head of them, by my brother, who has a vote, is to me	79   15   9
For a Womit & Nurse for poor Tom Kernan in the middle of the night, when he was expected to die, and I don't talk of the piper who was paid for keeping him awake as long as he was sober, is to me	2   13   1
	2   0   0
	<u>£122   8   9</u>

Signed in the place of Jemmy Cars wife  
Bryan Gerraghty his Mark x

-----

You may say £122, so your Honour Sir Mark, send me this money by Bryan himself, who and I prays for your success always in Trim, so no more at present."

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Two instances of poetic justice of a somewhat personal nature may not be out of place in these sketches. I was being shown through one of the leading prisons in one of the colonies when a convict, passing in front of the governor and myself, chanced to look sharply at me. "Is not that prisoner's name D——?" I asked of the governor. "His name here is ——," replied the official, "but I see you recognize the face. He is the man you take him for. He is now doing a three years' sentence for an attempted murder." This was the man who was put in the witness-box at the Parnell Commission to "corroborate" some of the allegations contained in Pigott's forged letters. Every syllable of his evidence, in so far as it concerned the traversers in that political trial, was as false as every word in Pigott's productions. He singled me out for a special lying story about an interview with one of the Invincible leaders, in which I was alleged to have consulted with this man upon matters relating to the Land League. His testimony, being given solely with the object of verifying the charge implied in the forged letters, shared the fate of these documents when their true origin was made known in the confession of their author. But though D—— was thus made out to be a perjurer as well as a twice-convicted would-be

murderer—with an old conviction for common theft in the bargain—this loathsome ruffian was released from a life sentence shortly after the close of the Parnell Commission as a reward for his services before that tribunal! On seeing this malignant enemy inside a prison which I chanced to look through I could not help experiencing some satisfaction at finding that justice had again overtaken a criminal of the worst kind, who had essayed his third deed of blood in the colony that gave him shelter. Why such a man, and others of his kind, should be dumped upon Australian ground by the orders of Dublin Castle might some day suggest a pertinent question from parts of the antipodes to the Colonial Office in London.

The other instance had also a personal interest. In the capital of another colony there was a "strong Nationalist," who, as such, had been elected not only to the City Council, but to the Upper Chamber of the Legislature. He had been considered as a foremost leader of the Irishmen of the place and, aided by the Catholic bishop's influence, had worked his way into the public positions he occupied at the time I arrived in the city. Some ugly rumours of a previous record in Ireland had gained currency just at this time, and as these were associated with one of my several arrests during the Land League troubles, I was called upon by the "strong Nationalist," who felt that my coming would affect his new political fortunes some way. He was recognized at once as a Dublin Castle constabulary reporter, upon whose notes of a meeting at — I was arrested in 1881, and sent back to prison. He admitted having done me this service, and claimed that he was only performing his duty as a servant of the state. Asked whether it was on this record that he had succeeded in obtaining seats in the Legislature and the City Council, he admitted that this part of his career had not been referred to when he was engaged in wooing his constituents. Shortly after leaving this colony I learned that the "strong Nationalist" had ceased to be a member of the bodies he had hitherto adorned.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE CONSTITUTION OF VICTORIA

THE Upper House of the Victorian Legislature is elective, on a property qualification representing a £10 freehold or a leasehold of £25. Special franchises also exist enabling graduates of universities and members of the professions to vote without the ordinary qualification. Members of the Council are elected for six years. They are required to be thirty years of age or over, and to have been possessed of an estate of £100 a year or more up to the year previous to nomination. They receive no salary, but are privileged to travel free over Australian state railways. There are forty-eight members at present in the Legislative Council.

The Legislative Assembly is elected every three years on what amounts to manhood suffrage. There are no property qualifications for membership, but candidates must be twenty-one years or over, "natural born" or naturalized subjects, with a two years' residence in the colony. Members receive £240 a year and free passes over the railways. The present Assembly consists of ninety-five members.

The Melbourne Parliament House is by far the handsomest of the many Legislative buildings of Australasia. It stands in a commanding position, looking down Bourke Street, and forms, with its Doric columns and classic façade, its flight of one hundred steps and spacious portico, a building of much beauty. It is said that it has cost some sum in the neighbourhood of a million for construction. It was interesting to learn that the site was suggested by the late Mr. Childers, when occupying some government post in Victoria, before he became a member of the Imperial Parliament. The inside of the Melbourne Legislature is worthy of its external appearance. Both Chambers are very handsome in design and commodious in arrangement. The Upper House is planned in a horse-shoe form, and has its roof supported by beautiful Corinthian columns with richly carved



cornices. The Lower House, or Assembly, is a square apartment, and is larger than the Council Chamber, owing to its larger membership. It is nearly as spacious as the House of Commons, though it has only to provide seats for less than a hundred legislators. The plan of the Assembly is somewhat after that of the House of Commons, only it is more generous in its provisions for members' needs and movements than its Westminster model. There was no place found for the barbarism of the Ladies' Gallery, or the eyesore of the dark wainscoted walls of the Commons. These features are respectively represented by more humane and more gallant arrangements, and the more cheerful hues of bright and marble surroundings in the Victorian popular Chamber.

It is well to be a member of the Assembly in the Melbourne Parliament. A member of this House receives a salary of £240 a year, and can travel, free of tickets, over all the Australasian railways. In the building of the Legislature his convenience and comfort are sensibly provided for in libraries, reading-rooms, restaurants, baths, and billiard tables inside, with a lawn-tennis ground outside, and in many other respects. All this is as it should be, and is only after the just provisions which almost all countries ruled constitutionally make for those who are compelled to give time and labour, and not a little sacrifice, to the service of the state. The British Parliament stands alone in niggardly and prejudiced isolation in this respect, and compels many poor men who are selected (possibly for no particular political sins of their own) to serve the public at their own expense, and to be solicited, in addition, by every begging society, body, association, and individual in the community whose mission it may be to look for contributions from the victim of what is ironically called "popular choice."

Some of these provisions were not made law in Victoria without a bitter struggle. The Upper Chamber, being a non-salaried body, refused to agree with a proposal for payment of members, but offered to accept a more modified plan confining the period of payment to one session of Parliament, to be renewed again, if desired, by a succeeding Parliament. The then Premier (late Speaker of the Assembly) refused to acquiesce in the right claimed by the Council to dictate such terms, and tacked the proposed provision on to an appropriation bill. This the Council refused to pass, whereupon the unprecedented course of dismissing all the government officials and judges for want of supplies was resorted to. An extraordinary situation followed,

bringing on something like a commercial crisis. This revolutionary course produced the desired pressure from public opinion, and the Upper House was compelled to pass the, to them, obnoxious proposal as a separate law. The trouble was not over, however, as the Assembly felt called upon after this experience to try conclusions with the other House once for all, on the question of its claim to co-ordinate power with the popular Chamber, and a sum of money was provided for to enable Mr. Berry to proceed to Imperial headquarters and invoke the intervention of the Colonial Office in the quarrel. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was then in the post now occupied by Mr. Chamberlain, and he declined to intervene in any way, on the grounds that Victoria had full self-governing powers conferred upon her, and that disputes of the kind in question must be settled on their merits when they arose. Peace, however, was more or less restored between the contending Chambers, and the payment of members remains part of the constitution of Victoria.

The two leading parties in Victoria are called Liberal and Conservative. There is very little in the programme or policy of either to correspond with the shibboleths of the parties known by these names in Great Britain. There being no state religion or hereditary aristocracy in the colonies, there is no room for the kind of Toryism out there which has the protection of these privileged corporations as its *raison d'être* in England. The politics of Victoria are somewhat mixed. Some Conservatives are Free Traders, others are Protectionist. Then there are Liberal and Labour Protectionists, and Labour and Liberal Free Traders; so that no specific name will rightly define the principles or platform of either party. The rule is to name the party in power the Ministerialists, and to call those out of office the Opposition.

The Turner Ministry now in office in Victoria has the support of the Labour members, who hold the balance of power in the Assembly. This is also the present Parliamentary situation in the two neighbouring colonies of South Australia and New South Wales. This political state of things has thrown enormous influence in each of these colonies into the hands of their respective Labour parties. They virtually dictate the Parliamentary policy, while the Liberal office holders make the pace of its application. Great advance has therefore been made during the past five years in adding Progressive measures to the statute books of three or four of these countries. This legislation has been in the direction of increased protection for workers, graduated taxation, curtailing the further alienation of land, the putting of labour on land, state



advances to cultivators, facilitating the profitable export of farming produce, and various kindred provisions; all tending in the direction of a modified state socialism and to what is known as the "back to the land" administration. Victoria has not yet proceeded as far on this progressive road as New Zealand or South Australia, though in one respect, the legalising of a minimum wage in factories, it has outstepped even the legislative temerity of its two rivals. To explain the nature and scope of this important law it will be necessary to glance back a little at the cause which mainly brought about this courageous and drastic enactment.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE LEADING PROTECTIONIST COLONY

VICTORIA is the Australian stronghold of "Protection," and one of the staunchest defenders of this perverted principle of state socialism is the leader of the Labour party in the Melbourne Legislature. Mr. Trenwith is a doughty champion of any cause that claims his support. He has a long and creditable record as a Labour leader. His Parliamentary reputation stands very high in a House that has produced some of the ablest of Australian statesmen. He is a clear, forcible, and convincing speaker; giving evidence in the matter and manner of his deliverance of a well-informed and skilled debater. His advocacy of "Protection" is a transparently sincere one, if not always defended by facts as sound or contentious as conclusive as his earnestness of pleading is manifest and strong. The "prosperity of America under protection" is the stock argument in favour of its adoption for Australia. But why overlook such amply protected countries as Germany and Italy? If "protection" is a sovereign remedy for low wages and uncertain employment, it works with singularly opposite results in some of the most protected of countries. America, with its almost limitless natural resources in land, coal, iron, gold, silver, and all the minerals, together with the pick of the brawn and muscle of Europe to work these into wealth and prosperity, would be prosperous under any system that did not openly violate reason and common sense in the work of wealth production. The true contention about the prosperity of the United States is that which affirms that it has been built up despite the restrictions placed upon the great Republic's capacity by the fetters of "protection."

It is also claimed in Victoria that infant industries in new countries stand in need of defence against the producing powers of older countries like England and Germany. This is more reasonable ground to take up, though a feeding-bottle diet, no matter how excellent in its way, is not necessarily the best kind

of food for an adult. New South Wales, Victoria's next-door neighbour, has shown that it can walk, and run, and work, in an industrial and producing sense, without the patent infants' food kind of nourishment which Victoria still demands for its trade and commercial sustenance. If it could be shown that work was more general and continuous, and wages higher and the necessities of life cheaper in Victoria than in New South Wales, there would be a powerful argument in such a state of things with which to uphold the "protectionist" principle. But I failed to discover any such relatively more favourable conditions in Victoria. In fact, New South Wales appeared to me to show equal evidence of industrial activity, and a more rapid recovery from the results of the disastrous bank-made land "boom" of 1893, than was to be seen in Victoria.

This colony is by no means a unit in the support of "protection." Farmers, builders, masons, carpenters, miners, and other consuming classes grumbled to me very much at the price which the community had to pay in high duties for the spoon-feeding of manufacturing industries, which seemed able to take care of themselves, without tariff nourishment, across the New South Wales border. I also found that some of the Victorian Labour leaders of the standing and ability in Labour politics of Mr. Prendergast, M.L.A.,\* had weaned themselves from the fallacies of protection.

Then there is the argument that a Free Trade Australia would inevitably bring down upon its industries the competition of China, India, and Japan, where wages are so low and the standard of living so far inferior to what obtains in the colonies. This is a plausible plea, and is now about the strongest remaining prop beneath the "protectionist" platform at the antipodes. But it is overlooked in this contention that the products of one country are negotiable only in the produce of the country with which the trade connection exists, and if, as is not at all improbable in the near future, Indian, Chinese, and Japanese manufactures pour in increasing volume into the Australian and British markets, it will only be in return for some equivalent produce which must beget the economic compensation of export exchange.

The best argument advanced in the Australias in favour of "protection" is the one which insists that it is a strong evidence of colonial independence. In face of this reasoning I always

\* Defeated at the late general election as a Free Trader.

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surrendered my arms as a theoretical free trader. The power to protect anything in a country, new or old, against external opposition is undoubtedly an evidence of independence, and to that extent, and on that ground, that a tariff or no tariff is after all primarily a matter of domestic concern to a people who have the right to make their own laws, one can understand and sympathize with such regulations founded on such reasoning. On these two grounds "protection" stands in a clearer light, and has the claim of national sympathy behind it. Australian Federation, when it comes—which is not likely to be in this century—will bring inter-colonial free trade with it, and the fiscal barriers set up between the several sister colonies will then probably be thrown down. Possibly the freer commercial intercourse which this will bring about between the various countries concerned may determine the ultimate fate of "protection" at the antipodes.

Meanwhile the reign of "protection" in Victoria has begotten some Labour legislation of a very far-reaching nature. A minimum wage bill was passed into law a short time ago, which is intended to be a kind of Labour complement to the tariff-fed manufacturing capitalists. Such a law was clearly called for. Factories were fostered under high tariffs on imported goods to an extent which brought about such a reaction in low wages and careless conditions of employment as appealed to the Labour members to demand remedial measures from the same Legislature. It was argued, and with obvious reason, that if the consuming public were to pay higher prices for their clothing, furniture, and other necessaries, so as to protect domestic production against outside competition; it was only fair that a just share of the law-made profits thus secured to manufacturers by the tariff should go to the wage-earners. This claim appeared so reasonable that the Legislature passed this progressive Factories Act, and it came into force in 1896. It is the first attempt that has been made in modern times to make a minimum wage a legal obligation upon employers, and the working of such a law will be watched with the keenest interest by everyone interested in the progress of Labour legislation.

The manner in which the minimum wage is to be determined is set forth in Clause 15, which declares:—

" 15.—(1) In order to determine the lowest price or rate which may be paid to any person for wholly or partially preparing or manufacturing, either inside or outside a factory or workroom, any particular articles of clothing or wearing apparel or furniture, or for bread making or baking, the Governor in Council may, if he think fit, from time to time appoint a

special board, consisting of not less than four or more than ten members, elected as may be prescribed, and a chairman.

"(2) Of such members one half shall be appointed as representatives of occupiers of factories, or workrooms in which such articles are prepared or manufactured, and one half as representatives of persons employed in wholly or partly preparing or manufacturing such articles.

"(4) So far as regards any articles in respect to which any special board is appointed, every such special board shall determine the lowest price or rate of payment payable to any person for wholly or partly preparing or manufacturing any such articles specified by such special board.

"(5) Such price or rate of payment shall in the case of work to be done outside a factory or workroom be fixed at piecework price or rate only; but in the case of work done within any factory or workroom it may be fixed at a piecework price or rate, or a wages price or rate, or both, as the special board thinks fit. Provided that the board shall, on request of any occupier of a factory or workroom, fix a wages rate for any work done by persons operating at a machine used in such factory or workroom.

"(7) Every special board shall also determine the number, or proportionate number, of apprentices and improvers under the age of eighteen years who may be employed within any factory or workroom, and the lowest price or rate of pay payable to such apprentices or improvers.

Other provisions are made relating to the limits of labour by Chinese workmen; (every Chinaman working at a trade is made "a factory" for purposes of inspection) the inspection of rooms in which home work is carried on; the stamping of articles of furniture "made in Europe"; overtime and various other conditions—all tending to safeguard the health and interests of employees. Eight hours a day, and a half-holiday per week, are legally established for every factory worker. These may be called "drastic measures" by the friends of capital; but they are, in the main, the outcome of that "protectionist" propaganda which is always ready to ask in every country for as much "state socialism" as will be advantageous to vested interests, and equally ready to oppose any further extended application of the doctrine. It cannot, therefore, be matter of wonder to find a Labour party which holds the balance of Parliamentary power in the Melbourne Legislature insisting upon the principle that what is deemed good for the capitalist goose may also be beneficial to the Labour gander of Victoria.

How long the Labour party of Victoria will continue its solidarity and the prudent policy which seeks for certain, if gradual, advance towards its ends, through an alliance with opportunist Liberalism, is a question that may find a reply in the general election just over. Signs were not wanting when I was in Melbourne to show that a probable cleavage on the

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Protection question was a rock ahead of the party. Then there is the certain offer of portfolios, in the very near future, on the part of Liberal ministers to auxiliary Labour leaders. Will the rank and file of the Labour movement remain loyal to office-holding Labour members? The question is one that ought not to need the asking in democratic countries blessed with full self-government. But working men are not as tolerant of the assumption of responsible power by some of their leaders as they are of men who advocate their cause solely for the power and influence which that support obtains. The mass of workers are too shortsighted for such a strain upon their jealous watchfulness of men of their own rank and calling who attain public eminence or popularity. Distrust with them grows with the distinction of their fellows, and the Labour leader who knows his own class well, and is devoted to the interests of the cause he has espoused, will have to pause before accepting offers which, even though they may appear to mean influence and power for the Labour cause within the government of a colony, might possibly spell disruption to the Labour phalanx outside, and destroy the balance-holding advantage possessed by undivided ranks and councils within the Legislature.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### VICTORIAN LAND LEGISLATION

IT could not fail to be of much interest to an humble Irish land reformer to find in the Australian colonies marked traces of his countrymen's work in the land laws of these countries. The present "land for the people" laws of New Zealand were the outcome, in the main, of the late Mr. Ballance's efforts when in power, in 1891, to see that principle embodied in legislation. Long previous to this, however, Mr. (now Sir) Charles Gavan Duffy, when Minister of Lands in Victoria, remodelled the land laws of that colony on lines which, if not as advanced as those of his fellow-Ulsterman's labours, were, for the time, a great advance upon anything that had yet been done in any of the colonies to place people and labour upon the soil. Sir Charles describes the scope and character of the "Duffy Land Act," in his delightful autobiography, as follows:—

"The main object of the law was to give increased facilities for the settlement of the industrious classes on the public estate. For myself my design was to make the possession of land as nearly universal as possible, to counterpoise the fact that political power was absolutely universal, and to give a healthy and pleasant pursuit to the large class of diggers who, when they became unfit for that trying pursuit, might become discontented and dangerous to the public safety; and I hoped to see a multitude of my own countrymen, who had been driven from the land in Ireland, find a safer and more prosperous home on the genial soil of Victoria. All the agricultural land of prime quality in the colony, estimated to exceed ten million acres, was reserved exclusively for agricultural settlement. Near the chief towns, goldfields, railway stations, seaports, and other centres of population, agricultural areas were ordered to be surveyed into farms ranging from 40 to 640 acres. These farms could be selected by any person of either sex who was of age and domiciled in Victoria, provided he or she appeared personally before the land officer and made a statutory declaration, equivalent to an affidavit, that the land was selected for his or her own use and benefit, and not as agent for any other person. A selector prepared to occupy and cultivate the land was alone entitled to select, and the Act contained the most careful and elaborate provisions to punish anyone who attempted to evade the law. A selector selecting on behalf of another was liable to a prosecution for misdemeanour, and the person who employed him to a prosecution

for conspiracy. If anyone got into improper possession a sheriff could be required to empanel a jury, who were authorized to eject him and put the lawful selector in his place. The portion of the area not selected was to be declared a commonage for the benefit of the selectors as long as it was unsold, and the commonage fees expended exclusively on local improvements. The price of land was in no case to exceed £1 an acre, which the selector might pay at once and get the title deeds, or pay for one half, renting the other moiety at 2s. 6d. an acre for eight years, this rent being credited as part of the purchase money, a principle which I introduced into land legislation for the first time. The price and rent of the land went into the Public Treasury, but practically to be returned to the people who paid it, one fourth of it being expended on paying the passage of immigrants to keep the labour market sufficiently supplied, and two fourths to be expended on the great highways of communication, on the local roads and bridges, in order to render markets accessible to the new centre of agricultural industry. Among the immigrants, I designed to reach a new class, from whom I anticipated important advantages, Germans, Frenchmen, Italians, and Spaniards, capable of teaching those light and genial industries of southern Europe for which the soil and climate of Australia are so propitious. A section (one square mile) of each area was to be reserved for public purposes, in order that churches, schools, savings banks, mechanics' institutes, courts, post offices, public gardens, baths, markets, and other agencies of civilization might in good time follow the settler."

Many of the enlightened provisions contained in this Act have suggested similar proposals in the subsequent land legislation of other colonies. The Duffy Act itself was not fortunate in its operations. Defective drafting—not the work of the author—the hostility of the squatters, and the operations of "dummy selectors" (a practice still resorted to in several of the colonies), all told against the success of a measure which was conceived in a broad spirit of popular utility.

Following the example of New Zealand, Victoria has legislated on the "back to the land" lines in recent years. In 1893 "The Settlement on Lands Act" was passed for the promotion of village settlements, Labour colonies, and of homestead associations. These practical measures have not yet borne much fruit in this colony in the way of solving the unemployed problem, but they lead the way thereto whenever rulers and working men combine to make these beneficent laws effective for their purpose. Victoria has much less of an area, and consequently less soil for settlements, than any of the other colonies except Tasmania. She has, therefore, paid more attention in the recent past to furthering manufacturing industries than to the opening up of the land for pushing employment in that way. Movements in both these ways are, however, compatible, and the laws just referred to are evidence of Victoria's wish to facilitate the development of all her available

resources for the people's good. Under the Act of 1893 land not otherwise appropriated, and not of an auriferous nature or permanently reserved, can be appropriated for purposes of homestead associations, Labour colonies, and village settlements. The amount of land set apart for a homestead association cannot exceed 2000 acres. This area is subdivided into holdings of not more than fifty acres, and the number of persons in a particular association must not be less than one member to fifty acres of the total area set apart for the purposes of such association. The right of permissive occupancy will be given for a period of three years to any member of a society or association seeking such a holding of land. The fulfilment of certain conditions, not difficult or expensive, gives a member over eighteen years of age a state lease. The member agrees in this document to carry out certain improvements, in a given time, to pay the rent to the state and such moneys as the Land Board may advance to him for the development of his holding. He must not sublet, assign, or borrow money on the security of the holding. He must reside on his allotment, or near it, and carry on the industry of agriculture, dairying, gardening, grazing, or similar occupation. Land is set apart for the purposes of a township near every association area, and each member of the association can obtain a "lot" of an acre in extent in such township, on lease, if he applies within one year of the setting apart by the Land Board of the land for such township site. This wise provision prevents the possibility of ground-rent landlordism in connection with such associations.

The provisions for the establishment of Labour colonies follow, to some extent, those described in my account of the Murray River Labour Settlements in Part III. Land, however, is much more scarce in Victoria, and there are one or two conditions imposed of an interesting nature. An area for a Labour colony is to consist of 1500 acres. This land is vested in three trustees named by the government. Provision is made for the election of four more trustees, representing persons or bodies subscribing to the funds of such colonies. The joint committee hears applications for membership of a Labour colony, and undertakes the management of same. This provision differs materially from that embodied in the law founding Labour settlements in South Australia, where the trustees or managers are elected annually by the members of the "camp" or association. Any industry may be organized by the committee under the Victorian Act, and such body can dispose of the proceeds as they deem proper.

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The state undertakes to donate £2 towards equipping such Labour colonies for every £1 subscribed by members or supporters. These are the main outlines of the Act as it relates to the organization and control of such land-working colonies as working men may wish to found for themselves, or those whom they may desire to help "back to the land."

Village settlements are also provided for in the Act of 1892, the conditions of occupancy being somewhat similar to those laid down for homestead associations. Allotments are restricted between one and twenty acres, and a lessee must covenant to pay every half-year, in advance, a rent equal to one-fourth of the capital value of his holding, which is not to be rated at less than a pound per acre. This amounts to only a shilling per acre per annum. Certain improvements are to be carried out within a given reasonable period, and the lessee is deterred from assigning, or mortgaging, or subletting the land, or from borrowing money on its security without first obtaining the permission of the Land Board. He must reside on the land and use it for purposes of food production.

These provisions of this Act are all progressive and enlightened, and teach a lesson to the lawmakers of the world which may have some effect in promoting a "back to the land" movement in Great Britain and Ireland some day. The working classes of Victoria have not taken advantage of these Land Laws, up to the present, to any extent. I was told the laws were only passed to please the Labour Party, and that the present government felt indifferent on the question of their application. Whether this is a *concession* or a *prejudiced view* I cannot say, but no real attempt had been made up to the time of my visit—two years after the Settlement or Land Act had become law—by either government or Labour organizations to utilize such admirable legislation for the purpose for which it was demanded. New South Wales is more active in this respect with similar laws than Victoria, while New Zealand has made land settlements and homestead associations a specialty of its government, and with marked success during the past few years. Victoria will therefore be passing along in the wrong path of progress by the successful example of her neighbors, and join actively in this great *social* *movement* of getting as many workers as possible on the land.

The general Land Laws of Victoria follow the main lines of those of the parent colony of New South Wales. These embody the principle of "free trade in land" in commercial



landlordism. Half of the whole land of Victoria has become alienated under such a law, with a population only a little over a million. Huge estates are therefore held in a few hands, and the best land in the country has passed from under the control of the state. The evils of this reckless system have been clearly seen in recent years, and legislation on restrictive lines, substituting state leases for alienation, has been strenuously advocated by land reformers and Labour parties since Henry George's advent to the colonies seven years ago. His persuasive speeches gave a powerful impetus also to the proposal for embodying the principle of "the Single Tax" in land laws, and some progress has been made in one or two of the colonies in that direction. There is yet plenty of land for tens of thousands of settlers in Victoria, and it is now certain that the further growth of land monopoly will be kept down in that as in the neighbouring colonies by the Parliamentary power and influence of the land reforming Labour parties.

Advances are made to farmers in Victoria out of Government Savings Bank funds for the improvement of their holdings or stock. Five per cent. interest is, however, charged, and two per cent. additional payment towards the redemption of the loan. These terms appear to give satisfaction, and upwards of half a million of these funds has already been loaned. In a recent report the Commissioner in charge of this department says: "The security of tenure conferred by the Commissioners' mortgage terms is a feature much appreciated by farmers, and the reduced rate of interest and the provision for gradual redemption also greatly encourage self-help. Many farmers have been enabled with the money borrowed to purchase stock and make improvements, thus increasing the income-earning value of their holdings."

Efforts are being made in the Victorian Legislature to enact a Protection of Homes Bill on lines similar to the Homestead Laws in operation in some of the American States and in parts of the Canadian Dominion. New Zealand has also legislated for a similar anti-eviction purpose.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### A TRIP THROUGH THE CENTRE OF VICTORIA

GEELONG is ~~about~~ <sup>about</sup> some ~~thirty~~ <sup>thirty</sup> miles from Melbourne, and can be reached by boat or rail. It has a pleasant situation on the south-west of Port Phillip, with a little bay of its own to look out upon. The town rises terrace-like up from the coast, and its churches, schools, and other leading buildings make a better show when viewed from the sea than when seen from the streets. It is a busy manufacturing centre, and has some large woollen mills and other factories, with foundries and sundry successful industries. It has a very fine agricultural country in the background, extending away to the Barrabool Hills. Including its outlying suburbs, Geelong boasts a population of 20,000, being the third largest city in the colony. It has a far finer situation than Melbourne, and on that account it is rather a pity the site was not chosen for the capital. If one could picture Melbourne as it now is, built round Coria Bay, with the nearer proximity to the open sea and the rising land behind, over which the city would spread itself right up to the hills in the near distance, Victoria would have a capital that could rival Genoa in the natural picturesqueness of its situation, as it does now in the architectural beauty of some of its streets.

Despite its mills and workshops, Geelong has a somewhat sleepy kind of look. Its streets are wide, but are in no other respect remarkable or handsome, there being few public edifices of any attractive build or design to correspond with the plan of the thoroughfares. The suburbs redeem the otherwise commonplace appearance of the city, with their gardens, parks, and ornamental shrubberies. It leaves on your mind, somehow, the impressions which an old maid decked in external fineries creates, sitting in unwedded solitude and thinking of the what-might-have-been. Geelong dreams of her lost potential greatness, and looks with no municipal affection across the intervening plain at her great and successful rival on the Yarra.



The country between Melbourne and Ballarat (about a hundred miles in a north-westerly direction from the capital) possesses some interesting scenery, but nothing very striking or calling for more than passing reference. The rise in the journey is gradual, and lands you in an hour or so on a plateau-like region some one thousand feet above the level of the sea. Huge sheep walks are passed on the way, with their almost interminable boundaries. Good farming land is plentiful round about Bacchus Marsh, and forests are passed which will be cleared some day and the soil turned into holdings. On reaching the higher country some mountains are seen of a cone-shaped kind, and they liven up the look of the landscape considerably. The land greatly improves in character as Ballarat is neared, and suggests that this favoured district has latent sources of prosperity in its rich soil more lasting than in its once world-famed gold mines.

Ballarat may be said to have had its early days rocked in a cradle of gold. The rush to that part of the colony in the early fifties, and what followed in the discovery of the richest mines in the world, are matters of history familiar to everybody who has read anything about Australia. Men of all kinds and climes flocked in by tens of thousands. Melbourne became a deserted city. The government officials partook of the fever, and joined in the hunt for gold. Nuggets weighing two thousand ounces were found a few feet under the ground, and no less than £12,000,000 worth of the precious mineral was got in one year between the Ballarat and Bendigo diggings.

Then the stupidity and avarice of the newly-organized Victorian government led to serious trouble. Miners were not only compelled to pay two or three pounds for diggers' licences per month, but to produce these obnoxious permits whenever demanded by the camp police. Numbers of men were arrested and treated as common felons for not having the required paper to show. Goaded to madness by such treatment, the miners resolved to resist, elected an Irish miner, Peter Lalor, as leader, and threw up a stockade, outside of Ballarat, to fight it out with the government forces. The stockade was rushed early one morning by a superior force of police and military, and some thirty miners and about a dozen of the military were killed. Lalor was left for dead on the field, but was carried off by his companions to a place of concealment, where his arm was amputated and he was nursed back to recovery. The Eureka Stockade, however, settled the business. Melbourne juries refused to

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convict the indicted insurgents and their revolt as well as a general revolt against the law of an insubordinate Australia.

Three years afterwards Victoria was granted a full British form of constitution, and the first man to be elected to the new legislature was Mr. Peter Lalor, who was regarded as Ballarat. He afterwards became the Speaker of the assembly and is generally acknowledged to have been one of the most capable officers who ever held that responsible post. A Melbourne newspaper writes of this remarkable man, who died in the city of Melbourne in 1880, so that he was thirty years before the first outbreak of insurgent miners from the summit of the Eureka, "that he sat in one-armed dignity in a chair of state beneath a canopy, and surrounded by the insignia of a peer and a nobleman." Mr. Lalor died in 1880, his funeral being attended by the governor of the colony and all the members of the Victorian assembly.

A stranger, knowing the title of the late mayor of Ballarat would find it hard to believe if he had any experience of other mining centres that the picturesque city of Ballarat with its narrow streets and spacious public buildings, could ever have been a digger's camp. The Ballarat of our time would make a becoming capital for one of our other colonies. In leading street, Sturt Street, it probably has more imposing architecture in all Australasia, being equal to the finest of Old-world towns. Dublin, and having a frequented thoroughfare running down the centre. Other fine thoroughfares abound, and massive and handsome structures are seen on every hand, each one being well each other in design and execution. Churches and churches glared lifting their tapering spires to the great sky of the skies.

Here, as elsewhere in Australia, the Catholics lead the way in the beauty and solidity of their sacred edifices. The very popular Order, whose members, besides the nuns, are the Sisters of Nazareth, have a very fine convent situated on one of the most elevated sites of the city. Ballarat being the seat of Catholic and Protestant missions, the city has boasts of two cathedrals, and the same disparity in the style and finish of both of them would be true of any community in Europe. The city also possesses a large number of public institutions, all in architectural keeping with the best buildings. Colleges, schools, convents, museums, and libraries are scattered over the city and its suburbs, and speak loudly for the religious, educational, and public spirit and good fortune which have adorned Ballarat with all the needs of the most advanced civilization of our day.

What I have seen to see in a city is plenty of land embraced

within its limits. The hideous "sky-scraping" character of some of the American cities, with their fifteen and twenty-five-storied monstrosities, is not seen in Australia yet, and I hope never will be. In Ballarat most of the dwellings are detached and have small gardens around them, tastefully planted as a rule with shrubs and flowers, giving to the city some of the freshness and natural charm of the country. There is probably a larger area occupied by this small city than that covered by the city of Birmingham, with seven times its population. Out in the suburbs there are pretty walks and drives, with ornamental lakes and a botanical garden well stocked with the rarest of exotic plants. Ballarat, well watered and well drained, with its bracing altitude of situation, left the pleasant impression on my mind of a healthy, handsome, prosperous, and progressive city, well meriting the reputation of being Victoria's second centre of wealth, enterprise, and advancement.

Travelling between centres of interest such as one wishes most to see on a trip of this kind, it is not possible to do more than give a sort of thumb-nail sketch of the country and scenery *en route*. I only journeyed over a limited portion of Victoria, mainly in the centre of the country, and, except where stoppages were made, the opportunities offered of judging of the land and resources of such portions of the colony were only such as a railway train and an occasional coach journey afforded. I believe, from what I learned from people who are well acquainted with Victoria, that some of the most attractive of its scenery lay outside the route over which my all too short visit to this interesting country took me.

From Ballarat to Ararat is some fifty miles in a westerly direction, and the whole country, as well as that leading north to Maryborough, literally "smells" of gold. Gold mines are seen on all hands, and, unlike most other goldfields visited by me in other parts of the world, the soil, too, is rich and the scenery and the surroundings most agreeable. Usually Nature imposes a heavy penalty upon the passion for gold hunting. She either plants the ore in a desert-like region, or where some danger or privation exists, involving more than the ordinary risks of life to those in pursuit of the coveted yellow metal. But Victoria has none of these drawbacks or difficulties associated with her mining camps. The country is pleasant to look upon, the land is rich near most of the mines, while the climate is healthy and agreeable all the year round.

Ararat is another gold-mining centre, and in the days of its



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fame provided hopes of fortunes for ten times its present population. It boasts of having sent a ton and a half of gold "under escort" to Ballarat every month, in the fifties, from the various mines in the vicinity. Now there are no more than a dozen mines in active operation, though hope still lingers in the minds of Ararat's citizens that prosperous days will dawn again for the place. It is a town charmingly situated in a saucer-like plain with a circle of hills in the near distance; Mount Mistake and Mount Ararat rising above their fellows a few hundred feet, and lending an added charm to the landscape. Viewed from the elevated position occupied by the Lunatic Asylum, the town and plain and hills have a most pleasing effect on the eye. The district is agricultural as well as gold-producing, and wheat, wool, and dairy produce are among the fruits of its excellent farming land. Everything about the little town speaks of a prosperous district and an industrious people.

A splendidly-equipped Lunatic Asylum is the chief lion of Ararat. It stands in about 200 acres of ground a couple of miles out of the town, and commands a fine prospect of the surrounding country. There were close upon a thousand patients in the institution at the time of my visit; the Asylum answering for Ballarat and other large centres in the colony. A great number of the male inmates are miners—men who sought for mines and found madness. It was most pathetic to go among them and hear them talk of reefs, alluvial finds, nuggets, and all the rest. One of them, a poor old man with a fine face and head, offered me half a million if I would only expose — Bank, which had cheated him out of a mine worth countless millions. Nothing that the most humane care could do to minister to these hapless creatures appears left undone. About 200 women were numbered among the patients. They were quartered in a special wing of the building. Music, theatrical performances, and other mentally healing means are provided by the staff for the solace of the unfortunates. A good percentage of the afflicted recover under the treatment resorted to. "Cottage homes" are built in the grounds, into which the quiet and more hopeful cases are removed, and the result of this most happy idea of allowing home-like life to exercise its beneficent effects upon the afflicted intellect has been most encouraging. I went into many of these cottages, and it struck me, in noting their general appearance and bright surroundings, as if I had seldom in all my journeyings on four continents seen this most affecting of all human ailments more tenderly or more touchingly cared for.



Maryborough, thirty or forty miles N.E. of Ararat, has the distinction of possessing the finest and most costly railway station in Victoria, and its citizens know it too. It is the pride of the place, and built, of course, at the cost of the state, which rightly owns the railways. Why a little town like Maryborough, even though a railway centre, should have been presented with what Melbourne wanted more badly, is only to be guessed at on the theory that all the members for the "marvellous" capital do not possess as much combined persuasive power over Victorian ministries as a single member for Maryborough. The town is named after the capital of Queen's County in Ireland, from whence a gold camp's warden hailed who took a dislike, in the early mining days, to such an unhistoric calling as Simpson's Diggings.

Maryborough is the centre of a very active mining industry, and scores of gold mines are operated by its population. A good number of Chinese diggers and fossickers are found here, and there appears to be very little active prejudice existing now against their intrusion among the white workers. Some of the larger mines in the locality acquired a big reputation years ago for rich stone, but the yield has fallen off recently. Deep sinking is going on in most of the properties, and the value of the ore has got better on reaching lower levels. All the smaller mines are owned by colonial and local shareholders, and the prosperous-looking town benefits by whatever dividends are thus earned, instead of the usual foreign investor.

There is a feature about gold mining in the older colonies of which little is known by the speculating world of England. This is the large number of gold mines that are worked on the following principle: A promising property is bought. A company is locally formed to work it, and just enough money is called up to keep the concern going. Calls of a shilling, or threepence, may be made on the shareholders until the necessary machinery is got working, and then dividends of a like sum or more are paid when earned. Men who work in such mines are always among the shareholders, and whatever is got out of the enterprise is, in their case, added to wages, and remains in any case in the town or locality. In other instances the owners of a mine lease it to miners, who operate it and pay "the rent" out of their good luck or good work, as the case may be. There are scores of good properties worked in this way in Victoria with most satisfactory results.

Then there are many more such mines in all the gold-producing



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localities that are profitably worked down to the water level, when for want of sufficient capital to provide adequate pumping machinery they are left derelict. Hundreds of such mines, with reefs carrying payable gold, are lying unworked in Victoria and Queensland at this moment, while London speculation is scouring the "booming" horizons of other and newer fields for more sensational but possibly less profitable chances of investment. In connection with the number of properties of this kind worked or idle in Victoria, it is well to bear in mind that the reefs which have yielded such an enormous amount of gold in this colony seldom average one ounce to the ton. To-day a mine in this the first gold-mining country in the world yielding two-thirds of an ounce would be considered a good property. This shows that *bonâ fide* mines, worked for steady profit on honest commercial lines, are remunerative. They tell for the benefit of the investor. The newer and more "booming" concerns, owned and practically operated from London, are for the advantage of the company-promoter, which explains a good deal.

Maryborough thinks a big lot of itself, make no mistake about that. Its method of dealing with unfortunate "Sundowners" (tramps), who have not influence enough to obtain admission to the Destitute Asylum, does not command my praise. They are put into prison for the crime of daring to be poor where there are so many gold mines. Maryborough also tried its hand at Local Option and closed up ten public-houses, giving compensation, however, out of increased licence revenue to the municipally-boycotted publicans. The usual conflicting accounts prevail as to the result of a decision which was carried on a town's vote by a majority of sixteen. The drinkers declared that Maryborough was never so drunk before as since the new state of things began, while the Temperance people assured me that the publican interest had given drink gratuitously, so as to increase drunkenness and make out an artificial case for repeal. Meanwhile the "houses" that were spared have done an increased trade, a fact which speaks rather badly for the moral effects of the Local Option experiment, at least in Maryborough.

Bendigo (modern name Sandhurst) is one of the most noted little cities in the colony. It is north-east from Maryborough, and over a hundred miles from Melbourne. The richest gold mines in the world were found here. There are 200 or more mines still worked in the district, and give employment to four or five thousand miners. The great majority of these properties are owned by the trading and working people of the locality, and



this is one reason why Bendigo wears a bright and well-to-do appearance. All the gold does not go to European speculators. The richest mines, however, the various properties called "New Chum," or "Old Chum," or combinations of names with that magic appellation, belong to English proprietors. Some of the mines are down below a 3000 feet level—the deepest quartz mines in the world. Depth in most cases does not involve the pinching out of reefs, though there is not now such a marvellous output of gold from these fields as made them at one time the wonder of the gold-mining world. But the annual yield of this still great goldfield will average close upon 200,000 ounces, the largest of any field in Victoria.

The population is made up chiefly of Cornishmen and Irish, the former being, as Cornishmen generally are everywhere, very clannish. They are spoken of among the miners as "Cousin Jacks." Miners' wages average £2 10s. a week, with a half holiday every Wednesday; the hours of labour being eight per day, and the leading mines working day and night in shifts of equal hours. A large number of "fossickers" (gold pickers) earn a livelihood by rooting along where the old alluvial finds were richest, and picking up odd grains of the precious metal. To the European, who is familiar with the rag and garbage pickers of large cities, the "fossicker" is an agreeable contrast. It gives the wondering traveller a vivid picture of what the prime days of the great goldfields in this colony must have been to find these men still able to pick up gold enough to repay them for the time expended in the going over of heaps and hillocks which must have been exhaustively sifted by other seekers long ago.

Bendigo has its foundries, flour mills, and distilleries, and is a self-contained, industrious, and lively place. It is a well-planned town for a mining centre, and has one or two handsome streets, adorned with some good buildings. It boasts of one of the finest ferneries in the colonies, with a nicely planted and pleasant little park extending along the banks of a small stream. It possesses a wine-growing industry, which promises to become very prosperous some day. Some of the wines are excellent in taste and colour, and need only the technique of mixture and manipulation, which have made the reputation of most European wines, to create a big demand for them. They are somewhat dear in price, and are not in consequence supported, as such excellent native productions would doubtless be, if high tariffs did not encourage expensive lists.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### HOW THE AUSTRALIAN POOR ARE CARED FOR

**B**ENDIGO possesses one of the Benevolent Asylums to which some brief reference was made in my remarks upon the system of poor relief in Adelaide. All the large centres of Australian population have similar institutions, and they are supported and managed upon practically a uniform plan: the government of the colony, in most instances, grants half the annual cost, and the remainder comes from local sources, such as "fairs," endowments, or subscriptions. In Adelaide, where the Asylum answers, I believe, for the whole colony, the state contributes all the expense. The Bendigo Asylum had, in 1894, an income of £8000, and the expenditure upon the institution, including £2000 given in outdoor relief during the same year, amounted to a similar sum. There were about 210 inmates, including thirty women. Their daily diet was as follows: Breakfast—oatmeal porridge and milk, or bread and milk. Dinner—beef and mutton, alternately boiled and roast, with vegetables. There is no weighing or measuring of allowances. Each inmate gets as much as he or she requires of whatever food is going. For the third meal, or tea, there is bread and butter, with tea or coffee, according to choice.

The outdoor relief is given chiefly in food, and in special cases in money. A woman having one child received, as per return shown to me, rations as follows for the week:  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of tea, 1 lb. of sugar, 3 lbs. of beef, and 8 lbs. of bread or flour. The cost per inmate annually, including salaries, upkeep, medical service, and medicines, etc., averages only £15. Unlike the English system of poor law relief, the official salaries take but a small percentage of the income for their share. The conditions of admission are *bonâ fide* inability, through impaired health or old age, to earn a livelihood. Subscribers to the institution can recommend deserving persons to the care of the Asylum. The staff con-

sists of a superintendent and some twelve assistants or nurses, including clerks.

The building is one of the finest in Bendigo, and cost £35,000 to erect. It has the appearance of one of our best hospitals in the old countries, and resembles in no way any of our prison-like workhouses. It stands in nicely laid-out grounds, well stocked with flower-beds and ornamental trees. The inmates saunter about in their own dress, or in one provided by the establishment, which, however, has no pauper look about it. Reading, chess and domino playing, and other social recreations are provided for in specially-arranged rooms. The dormitories, in all their equipment, resemble a first-class hospital, being high, well lighted, and comfortable; some of them overlooking the gardens, and possessing also the advantage which a wide balcony offers, on to which the sleeping apartments open. The dining-room is a lofty, handsome apartment, with pictures round the walls. There is also an organ at one end of the room, which is occasionally played while the inmates are dining. There is a well-stocked library, which includes books for the blind. In fact, I found nothing wanting in the place which a most thoughtful, considerate care had not provided for the broken-down workers who were compelled to seek the shelter of the place through the infliction of old age or the accidents of life.

I mixed with the inmates in the grounds, and found them cheerful and contented. Labourers, miners, and seamen were represented in the largest proportional numbers, but almost every other trade had a few representatives. "Domestic servants" described the occupation of ninety per cent. of the female members. All the inmates are expected to perform such work as health and capacity will permit. The women do the laundry and mending work, while gardening and other occupations supply healthful exercise for such men as are not totally unfitted by age or disease for labour tasks.

There is no social stigma attached to the inmates of these asylums. The pauper feeling engendered by the workhouse in the old countries does not exist in the minds of the inmates of the better institutions, or in those of the public towards the men and women who have fallen by the way in the struggle for existence. The work of providing a shelter, free from the idea of shame, for people thus circumstanced is considered in a high spirit of public duty, and not as an act of municipal or state obligation. This sense of a public duty towards workers who are disarmed by age or infirmity in the battle of life is one of the



traits of Australian character which help to make the Australian people democratic in the highest and best sense of the word. They are careful, and rightly so, on their own best account, not to sap the dignity of manhood or womanhood in their methods of ministering to the needs of those who become destitute. They have not copied the cold or professional charity of the old world in dealing with their unfortunate fellows.

In most European countries "the poor" are a necessary part of the social hierarchy. "Society" would have to invent them if they did not spring out of its laws and institutions as a necessary consequence of the ruling powers and influence of class government. Mechanical almsgiving, occasional free dinners to the poor, slumming, and all the rest, are simply part of the social hocus-pocus by which the idea of "superior classes" is indoctrinated in the popular mind, and made part of the every-day thinking life of the "common" people. Someone has truly said that the reason why "charity" is given to the labouring poor is, lest they should demand and take justice. Hence why the landlord lawmakers of the last generation framed their English Poor Law, under which a marquis in my native county of Mayo pays a portion of his rental of £20,000 a year—a very small portion—towards providing a pauper's maintenance and a degraded human being's status for those who are no longer able to earn their share of his lordship's twenty thousand. This is the tribute which permits the system of landlordism and of injustice to the labouring poor to exist. Without its payment Justice would overtake the whole horrible jugglery of land monopoly and workhouse relief, and take from class rule its two extreme but supreme foundations.

To familiarise the popular mind with the "charity" of the wealthy is to beget therein the notion that the idea of class rule is in the natural and inevitable order of things, and cannot and should not be disturbed. The system is also infectious, as are all customs that demoralise the people. The pastimes and occupations of the rich are imitated by those next them in the scale of society, on down to the degree of distinction which Charles Clarence Mungan draws with such humorous scorn in his *Woman of Three Cows*. The lowest strata of all, the degraded inmate of the workhouse, serves to emphasize the caste of wealth, and to make manifest to the community at large the comparative "nobility," power, and law-administering right of the land and property-owning few. To eliminate the pauper from the social system would be to take away one of the most powerful props of



"society's" anti-democratic influence in the state. Paupers are turned by law into social parasites to live upon and nourish with the degraded public spirit they create those evils which are at the very root of what begets them, and the unnatural poverty and consequential discontent that are found side by side with growing wealth and progress in every European country to-day.

The Benevolent Asylum system is about as near as the pro-English Land Laws of the colonies would enable Australians to go towards preventing the germination of their kindred offspring, the legal pauper, in the soil of these new states. "The land should sustain the poor," is one of the commonplaces of land reformers. Of course it should, and a good deal more, but not in the way of providing the upkeep of pauper-making manufactories. "The poor" are, paradoxical though it may appear, the chief supporters of land monopoly. The Irish workhouse is the strongest ally of the Irish landlord. It is the greatest stimulant of that wretched land-hunger which to-day enables a yearly tribute of £10,000,000 to be levied upon the worst fed and the worst housed peasantry of Europe, in defiance of every principle and canon of economic rent and of agrarian justice. The fear of the workhouse is the last and only security for a rent which is simply the legal blackmail exacted from industry by a law-making and governing landlordism.

Australia rejects the English institution of state-made pauperism, though it has unfortunately taken English Land Laws as its land code; modified in the right direction to some extent, it is true, and destined to become more so in the near future. To eliminate the pauper is, however, a great moral and social advance upon the state of things "at home," and it is one of the agreeable instances in the life of these new countries in which the visitor sees an undoubted improvement upon the social ways and means of the older lands.

Provisions are made in the Bendigo Asylum for the religious instruction of inmates, but no salaries are paid to chaplains. All ministers of religion are placed on a footing of equality, in every respect, in their visits to members of their respective creeds. A visiting committee is one of the features of the administration, and a yearly report embodying the audited accounts of the Asylum has to be printed and published. There is a lying-in hospital attached to the place, of obvious benefit to the poorer working classes, and the cost of this department also comes out of the institution's sources of state and voluntary income and support.

A movement has been on foot for some years to obtain some

central supervision over these destitute asylums, and for a fuller provision out of the general taxation towards their more capable support. Undeserving men, ingrained idlers and loafers, will, of course, take advantage in this, as in any country, of the generous disposition of the community towards genuine incapacity, and it has been felt that more stringent means are necessary to deal with this order of ingrained laziness. The Turner Ministry are now promoting a measure with these objects in view. A central body, to be called a "Council of Charity," will be created for the general control of relief in destitute asylums. The colony will be divided into five districts for the purpose of the Act. The municipal bodies in these districts will elect a committee of nine for the local supervision of such institutions, and this body will be privileged to nominate one of its members to the Central Council. The government will nominate four additional members, making the Council a small but representative body of nine for the whole colony. This is the new machinery. Its ways and means are provided for as follows. Existing indebtedness of asylums to the state will be cancelled. The money for this and other purposes under the Act will be provided out of a fund which has been created under the Licensing Act for the payment of compensation to publicans where the operations of the Local Veto law compulsorily reduced the number of drinking houses. Amusements are also to be lightly taxed in the interest of the destitute asylums. All outdoor sports and the prizes offered thereat will bear a five per cent. tax for this purpose. Land values will have to bear a good proportion of the cost of the more efficient administration of relief, as the proposed bill empowers municipalities to increase their local rating, where necessary, to the extent of three-halfpence in the £. The measure is conceived in a thoroughly progressive spirit, and follows the lead of New Zealand laws in its main features.

Before taking leave of the gold-mining industry of Victoria I must mention the fact that several mining authorities in the colony told me they looked for a rich development in the Gippsland region. This is an interesting portion of the colony which I could not find time to visit, and I cannot therefore verify with my own impressions the accuracy or otherwise of the statements made to me. It is a forest country largely, and has not had anything like that attention given to its general development which has made other gold-bearing sections of the colony so prolific in their production of the precious ore. The govern-



ment has recently stirred in this direction, and public money has been voted to encourage enterprise in this and in other promising districts of the colony. Gold has been found over a very wide area of Gippsland, government officers having in their surveys and explorations discovered auriferous formations on the Dargo Plains, the Benemba country, and up in the high altitudes of the Bogong ranges. The output of gold from Gippsland in 1896 was, according to official figures, upwards of 116,000 ounces. All accounts seem to agree in predicting a profitable future for the industry in this section of the country.



## CHAPTER XXXI.

### VICTORIA AND ITS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

MY trip through the centre of Victoria took in the pretty little town of Echuca, fifty miles north of Bendigo, on the Murray river, which here separates the colony from New South Wales. There is an air of cosy, if somewhat sleepy, comfort about it, which would strongly tempt a lover of peace and quiet to make it his home for awhile. It recalled more than any other place in the colony one of those snug towns in California, which seem to resemble a well-fed cow, always chewing the cud of comfort and repose. Trees are tastefully planted in some of the streets, and one of the handsomest little Catholic churches in the country peeps out from the sheltering care of pines and gums. Echuca is a great wool-growing centre, and sends down the Murray on flat-bottomed boats immense consignments of wool every season. The land in the district is very good, and would, if so desired, divide up into excellent agricultural farms. The population numbers a little over 3000, and, judging from their houses, dress, and appearance, they are socially well provided for by the resources and industry of the locality.

On the journey back to Melbourne from the extreme north of the colony I stopped over at Kyneton, some fifty miles from the capital, the last of the towns visited by me in Victoria. It is situated in a rich agricultural locality, and wears a thriving, busy appearance, having some small manufactories in addition to its extensive farming industry. The land round about the town reminded me of the best agricultural districts in the south of Ireland, only Kyneton has a go-ahead, busy look about it which does not unfortunately mark many of our Irish towns, even where the soil gives of its best to the toil of the cultivator.

A few words more about this rich colony and we pass on to New South Wales. Its climate is much milder than that of the other mainland colonies, and it has a slightly larger rainfall. The heat in the summer is not so oppressive as in the more eastern

and northern latitudes of its neighbouring countries. Its soil, where water is found, is rich, and will grow anything from weeds to vines. Its chief food products are cereals, mainly wheat, oats, and barley. Hops, fruit, and hay are also profitably cultivated, and it is claimed that some two million acres of land are devoted to these industries. There are upwards of twenty-four million acres of the soil alienated, or in the hands of private owners, leaving about a similar quantity, but of an inferior quality, in the ownership of the state. Pastoralism is largely carried on, and the annual growth of wool is estimated at from fifty to seventy million pounds in weight, grown on the backs of ten million sheep. Victoria is the most extensive manufacturing member of the seven colonies, and counts all the leading trades among its active industries; finding employment in them for upwards of fifty thousand miners, factory, foundry, and other workers. Finally, this colony's crowning achievement is the production, from 1852 to 1896, of the astounding total of £240,000,000 worth of gold, the next largest output in the world to that of the United States within the same period, and more than one and a half times a larger production than that of all the other Australasian colonies combined, with the Transvaal thrown in.

I did not see enough of Victoria to enable me to speak with much knowledge of its scenery. My itinerary in the colony was mainly confined to a journey through its centre, from Melbourne to Echuca on the Murray river. This trip would resemble a journey, say, from London to Portsmouth, back to London, on to Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Whitehaven, and Morpeth, with a stoppage of a day or two at each place, and a stay over at Luton on the way back to London. Melbourne demanded more of my time than all the colony. The trip which will enable the traveller to see some of the best scenery of the Dividing Range takes you up from Melbourne to Bendigo, and is less than a couple of hundred miles. I travelled twice over the greater part of this line, and enjoyed its varied natural beauty very much. The route becomes very interesting when you reach the region of Mount Macedon, Victoria's highest mountain, some 4000 feet in elevation. You find yourself in a semi-Alpine country, and obtain many most pleasing glimpses of points in the Ranges and of the plain away below you in the south, with the blue waters of Port Philip glimmering in the far distance, and Melbourne smoky and indistinct on its shores. You regret that this striking-looking mountain is not as close to Melbourne as Mount Lofty is to Adelaide, as it would make a matchless back-

ing for the big city. The country round here is a favourite place of residence for Melbournians in the heat of summer. Many charming-looking residences are seen on the lower slopes of the Mount. On until you reach Dalesford the scenery becomes more and more attractive to the eye with variety and colour, hills and vales passing in review before you, with here and there the glory of a waterfall or the delightful music of some noisy rivulet, tumbling with the sweet monotonous chattering of mountain streams over ledges and boulders to the tempting depths of the nearest valley. Gum trees and pines are on every hand, on the slopes and on the summits of the hills, while wild flowers, creepers, shrubs, and grassy glimpses of the greenest verdure are seen near where secluded pools of Australia's most scarce and most precious product clothes the bush heather and the rambling woodbine with the beauty and brightness that are born of the blessed nurturing of life-giving water. Picturesque ridges are seen as you journey along, and many little towns are met with, having a Swiss-like look, nestling amidst hilly surroundings, and adding the animation of industry to the beautiful handiwork of nature.

The scenery away in the south-west, in Gippsland, and in the east of the colony, is accounted grand and beautiful; but I did not visit these localities, and cannot speak of their natural resources or landscapes. There are, it is said, over two hundred lakes in Victoria. I saw only a few, and these would be classed as "Tor-Loughs" in Ireland—small sheets of water. Australia having been stinted by nature in mountains and rivers, the most is made of such hills and streams as it does possess, and Victoria can fairly lay claim, small as its area is compared with other colonies, to having a fair share of rivers and mountains. It has proved itself to be the richest country in the world in gold mines, and its fruitful soil and industrious population may be relied upon to uphold its reputation for future prosperity and progress.



PART V.  
NEW SOUTH WALES

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CHAPTER XXXII.

FROM MELBOURNE TO SYDNEY

AS in the journey from Adelaide to Melbourne, the traveller has a similar choice of a sea or railway route from Victoria's capital to that of New South Wales. I made the trip by rail once each way from Melbourne to Sydney, and I would advise those desirous of seeing as much as possible of these countries, within the usual brief sojourn of a holiday or health visit, to travel overland. True as the saying is of any civilized country, that you must see the people in their homes and daily avocations in order to rightly comprehend the trend of their social or political progress—it is particularly so of the Australias. Melbourne and Sydney are great factors in the life of their respective colonies. To the untravelled European, and those who have not made some special study of these countries, these two wonderful cities almost stand for Australia. Little or nothing is known about the towns, villages, and hamlets that are scattered in large numbers over the colonies, and in which reside the potential energies that are to make the future of this antipodean continent.

It is comparatively easy to reach these inland places now. The rapid extension of railways has reduced what were coach journeys of a week to a train trip of a day. The great western district of New South Wales is not yet fully embraced in the railway service of the colony, except to the limited extent of a single line extending to Bourke on the Darling river, in an almost straight line from Sydney; but all the more thickly settled parts of the country, from Albury in the south to the confines of Queensland



in the north, are well within the reach of the existing state railway lines.

Albury is the border-town between Victoria and New South Wales, and has, of course, a custom house. The Murray river acts here as a line of fiscal demarcation, and the meridians of longitude are not requisitioned to indicate the exact spot at which your nightdress is to be unfolded and your portmanteau overhauled for what the officials think you ought not to carry with you into their country—that is when journeying back to Victoria. There is a bridge spanning the river at Albury, and a man crossing with a horse and buggy for a drive on the Victorian side has to make a deposit of £3 before he is permitted to enter the sacred "protectionist" portals of that country, though it may be only a mile distant from his own home. All teamsters have to make a similar deposit, but should they choose to return to the New South Wales side again the money is returned too. Apart from the troubles of the custom house, a change of line is necessary at Albury, owing to the different gauge of the New South Wales system. In fact, each colony may be said to have a railway gauge of its own. Western Australia has the narrow gauge, and so has South Australia. Victoria has a five feet three inches gauge and New South Wales one of four feet eight inches, while Queensland follows the taste of the western colonies and has a narrow gauge. The effect of this upon the Mail service is very troublesome. The European mails landed at Adelaide and sent overland to Brisbane have to be changed on to a new gauge at Bordertown, again at Albury, and again in crossing into Queensland, with, of course, a similar process with the out-going mails.

Albury will make a decidedly favourable impression upon the visitor. It has a picturesque situation, being ensconced within a circle of green hills, with the wandering Murray wending its straggling way by the town. There is a fine hospital in the little city, which, together with other well-built public edifices, make a very good show of municipal life for a place with a population of some six thousand souls. Seen from the slopes of one of the green hills which rise up from the outskirts of the town, the view is one of a most pleasing kind. The town nestles in trees, the houses look cosy and comfortable, and there is no bad land to be seen anywhere. Farms and vineyards lie scattered around the plain and speak of a place where peace and plenty must reign if industry only so wills it. The industries of the district

are chiefly farming and vine growing. Vineyards are large and numerous, as the soil is suitable for this profitable industry, and there is a big annual output from here of a wine that has already established a name for its excellence in the market. Mr. Fallon's great vineyard has a wider reputation than Australia. Wheat and meat are largely grown too, while tobacco is also included among the products of the choice land around Albury. The little city indulges in a big dream of future greatness, as already explained. The plain, now boasting so many rich vineyards and farms, is some day to be covered instead with streets and villas. The hills around are to be the sites of merchant princes' palaces, and of the residences of Governors-General and of Federal law-makers, when Albury becomes the capital of the Commonwealth of Australia. So, at any rate, believe its sanguine citizens. Nothing has so far been decided to the contrary anyhow, and when you are at Albury you feel inclined to wish success to its hopes of one day becoming the Washington of the antipodes.

I saw a good deal of the country life and industries of New South Wales, having stopped over at the towns I am about to briefly sketch, and as what I saw and learned impressed me very much with the natural richness of the country I travelled through, and its adaptability for greater settlement, I am wishful to make these inland and prosperous towns better known to those who know little or nothing of even their existence. From Albury to Wagga Wagga, a distance of seventy or eighty miles on the direct route to Sydney, the country is thinly peopled and the land devoted mainly to pastoralist purposes. It is capital land, however, and will have a big population upon it some day. At present it is a horse and cattle-breeding country. Some gold mining is carried on, too, in this district, but I did not visit the mines and cannot speak of their character or output.

Despite its ugly name Wagga Wagga is one of the prettiest little inland towns in the colony, and is seated in the centre of a district with a rich soil and plenty of varied and pleasing scenery. The Murrumbidgee river meanders along on the outskirts, while several green hills rise in the near distance from a smiling upland country. The streets of the town are wide and are planted with the pepper tree on each side. The houses are well built, and there are many handsome public buildings and churches. The countryside is dotted with choice residences and gardens, while vineyards and orchards are plentiful along the river banks. Being in a horse-breeding district, Wagga Wagga is a great sporting centre,

and attracts large gatherings from other parts of the country on its race days. Agriculture, as well as wool growing and grazing, is extensively carried on in the district, and I was glad to learn that some of the best tillage farms in the locality were held by fellow-countrymen of mine who were wise enough to select this Riverina country instead of a large city for their adopted home.

This was the town in which Thomas Castro, *alias* the "Tichborne Claimant," carried on the trade of a butcher before aspiring to become a member of the English "upper ten." He was a fellow-prisoner of mine in Dartmoor in the early seventies, and fared much better in that discriminating establishment than did his less aristocratic Fenian companions. His blue blood required more rations per day than were deemed sufficient for ignoble political prisoners, and he managed to get on pretty well on the whole during his "lagging," thanks, presumably, to his temporary membership of "Society." The site of his one-time meat-store is now occupied by a business concern named "The Tichborne House." Castro has therefore conferred some fame upon part of the home he inhabited before he joined both the aristocracies of culture and of crime.

I visited the convent schools of "Mount Erin" before leaving the capital of the Riverina. The building stands on a small hill overlooking town, river, and plain, and is one of the finest in Wagga. It was bathed in sunshine as we entered its hospitable doors. One comes away after going through the institution with the feeling that a life of sunshine is also the lot of the Irish Sisters in charge, and of their bright and fortunate pupils. Rarely even among those best of all God's workers—not excepting the Sisters of Nazareth at Hammersmith—have I ever seen a community more blessed with all that goes to make up happiness in this world—useful labours, cheerful lives, and a faultless home, and this is what "Mount Erin" stands for. The ordinary non-Catholic notion about convents is one suggesting a prison-like domicile of women weary of life, or who, in moments of religious fervour, have thoughtlessly decided upon a vocation of cheerless self-denial. This does not square in any way with the impression which has remained on my mind as a result of visits to hundreds of convents in Ireland, Great Britain, America, on the Continent, and in the East. It is true all nuns are not engaged in teaching children, nor are all convents "Mount Erins." Still, when I compare the life of constant and beneficent duty of most of these religious Orders, free from



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all the anxieties and disillusion of women's more selfish, if more natural, vocations outside, I feel convinced that a young girl rarely makes even a small sacrifice of either true pleasure or real happiness when she selects to be a Sister of Mercy or a member of a teaching Order.

In order to see as much as possible of the rich country of the Riverina I drove across from Wagga to Junee, on the way to Cootamundra, and to other places situated within this most favoured district. The rivers Murrumbidgee and Lachlan run through this region, and account in a great measure for the natural richness of its soil and pastures. They drain a big stretch of country west of the range of mountains which extends from south to north in a continuous chain, with varying elevations, from the borders of Victoria to those of Queensland. Immense plains stretch westward from this range to the course of the Darling river, and beyond to the confines of South Australia. The rainfall is very slight in this extensive region, and the damage wrought to sheep through the chronic droughts which obtain is the one standing danger to this great industry in New South Wales. In late years, however, the Legislature of the colony has sanctioned a generous expenditure of public money in the sinking of artesian bores on the western plains. Water for irrigation purposes has been thus tapped with great advantage to the industry to which these vast areas of grazing land are almost exclusively devoted. It is claimed by government officials that boring will find ample stores of buried water over an extent of fifty or sixty thousand square miles of this pastoralist country of the west.

What is known as the Riverina is but a comparatively small section of the country lying between the Macquarie and the Murray. There is probably not more than fifty thousand of a population on all the rich land north from Albury to Forbes that would support a million of people if it could be divided up into homestead holdings.

All the way from Wagga to Junee you pass through a beautiful and undulating country, partly cleared of timber and only sparsely peopled. Well-cultivated farms are met with for a few miles outside of Wagga. Occasionally a fine orchard or vineyard will be passed on the way. The fruit trees were coming into blossom at the time of my visit, and the bright colour of the peach-tree bloom was a conspicuous feature in almost every garden we went by. The land hereabouts will grow anything. Oranges, peaches, grapes, and all the fruits



most prized at Covent Garden flourish in the genial soil and all but perpetual sunshine of the Riverina.

My driver was an old mail-coach whip and famous 'possum hunter, and knew everything and everybody in the district we drove through. The opossum is an animal of nocturnal habits, and can be hunted by moonlight. His tracks are seen on the gum tree, the leaf of which he eats, and when these marks are discovered it is only a question of finding out which branch he sits upon and of bringing him down from his perch. Kangaroo hunting is not so safe a pastime, unless with the best dogs, for if the animal can reach his hunter with his formidable hind legs the sport is very much reversed, and it becomes a case for the doctor if not for an undertaker. The kangaroo is being rapidly exterminated, and will soon be as rare as the American buffalo, unless Young Australia abates his sporting zeal in pursuit of his country's typical marsupial.

Junee is a railway junction, and has some industries besides those that are general to this section of the colony. A branch railway line runs west from here through another division of the country with, I was informed, an equally fruitful soil given up to pastoralism. Within the last few years communication has been established with Victoria by this branch of the New South Wales state railway. It connects with that of the sister colony at Echuca, on the Murray, a town referred to in my notes upon my trip through Victoria. Junee is, therefore, likely to be a rising town and the centre of important traffic when these vast rich lands are more peopled and cultivated, as they soon will be. The town is by no means a handsome one. Its citizens are a pushful class, and are so politically lively that two papers can manage to live upon the strong appetite for rigorous party warfare which the Labour and Pastoralist issues create in the constituency. Mr. Arthur Rae, a one-time president of the powerful Labour organization, the Australian Workers' Union, was member for Junee for a time in the New South Wales Assembly.

Continuing our journey along the main line to Sydney we come to the town of Cootamundra, which is the centre of another most fertile portion of the Riverina. In situation, character of the surrounding country, and richness of soil, it bears some resemblance to Wagga Wagga. In many respects these towns in the centre of farming and sheep-rearing districts are alike. Life is practically the same in all of them. Farmers, as a rule, own their land, and have only a nominal tax to

pay for government or municipal purposes. Labour is well paid; wages being high as compared with what land workers receive in England. In the shearing season things liven up very much in these bucolic towns. Shearers come along and earn their one pound a day and spend it, when earned, in the town nearest the shearing station. Fairs are frequent also in these centres, and races are held as often in the year as a decent excuse for such a waking up of the community can be invented.

On the whole it strikes the observant stranger as being a comfortable, take-life-easy kind of existence to live in one of these Riverina towns. The climate is perfect and the scenery delightful; with no poverty, as a kind of negative social luxury, thrown in. The population will average about three thousand; some towns, like Wagga, going above that figure, and others, like Murrumburrah, dropping a little below. All alike build good schools, and take a pride in showing them to the visiting stranger. Every town seems to have business enough to keep half a dozen banks going. In many instances these are no better than gombeen institutions. They lend money to squatters and selectors at high interest, and foreclose the mortgage when the time for repayment arrives and does not bring it. A great number of the sheep ranches one sees in pastoralist districts belong to the banks, and the former owners or managers have become the mere boundary riders for the bank land-grabbers. Nearly all the land of the Riverina was taken up as pastoralist land before the natural richness of the soil and its adaptability for cultivation was known to the governing people in Sydney, and immense tracts of a soil that will produce almost anything is now in the hands of rich squatters, or, more properly speaking, of their former bankers. Had this land not been alienated in this manner the Riverina country, with its now well-known rich possibilities, would attract large numbers of settlers from less favoured portions of the colony.

Cootamundra is in a flourishing wheat-growing region, and is making rapid progress as a farming centre. Two small branch railways run north and south from here: one to Temora, a gold mining and agricultural district (indicating by its name the existence of a predominating Celtic population), and a line south to Gundagai. I regret I did not visit these two towns, as I was informed they are both interesting, and are as fortunate as other Riverina places in the possession of farm, orchard, and vineyard land of the most fertile kind. Next to Wagga Wagga Cootamundra struck me as the prettiest town I had seen in the Riverina.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### SOME TALKS WITH SHEARERS

I FELL in with a party of shearers while travelling to Cootamundra, and they imparted some interesting information about their Union, wages, and mode of living. A large number of them ride about from colony to colony on their own horses. Horse flesh is, of course, cheap in Australia, and the feed and care of an animal costs its owner very little consideration, especially if it is used for travelling through the bush. The shearing season varies sufficiently in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria to enable men to ride from one to the other of these colonies, making the round of the shearing sheds. The wages paid are at the rate of one pound for every one hundred sheep, and a shearer is considered a poor hand who cannot get through his hundred in a day. The shearer's minimum wage is, therefore, a pound a day while the work lasts; expert hands earning in proportion to their skill and activity. Jack Howe, of Warwick, South Queensland, sheared 321 sheep in one day with the ordinary hand-shears, a feat which stands unrivalled, I believe, in that line. The machine for clipping, which is superseding the old shears, does not quicken the stripping of the wool materially, though it gives a cleaner clip, and does not pinch the skin of the animal. The shearers live most sumptuously, and manage to do it at a cost that will astonish those of my readers who are not aware of the facts. They mess together in the shearing sheds and employ a good cook, to whom they pay a wage of seven pounds a week. The squatter sells them "tucker" at wholesale prices, and the average outlay for a week's food, with four substantial meals a day, amounts to no more than about seven shillings. Newspapers and periodicals are also provided by the common mess out of this sum, so that a shearer earning a pound a day can save, if he likes, fully five pounds a week while the work at the sheds continues. But, like the working miner, he earns and does not save. The end of the

shearing sees the beginning of "a good time" at the nearest town, and the squatters' cheques are only too often cashed and spent in an hotel or public-house before the spree is over. A horse is bought, a "matilda" (rug and canvas cover for sleeping out) and "billy-can" are purchased, and these added to the equipment, the shearer rides off to the next station where the woolly fleece wants clipping. The climate is so dry and the nights so warm that men can sleep under the gum trees or in the scrub bush without risk to health. When a halt is made for the night a fire of twigs is built, the "billy-can" is set on for tea or for something else, and the horses are allowed to find their own feed. The meal and the "smoke-ho" over, slumber is easily wooed within the sheltering folds of the faithful "matilda," underneath the friendly skies and stars.

The Shearers' Union is one of the strongest unions in the world. It has had its strikes and wars with a rich, powerful Pastoralist Association. One of these contests, in which it was beaten, and which took place a few years ago in Queensland, almost led to a revolution in that colony. The Union has, however, succeeded in fixing the rate for shearing, and there is not now in all the Australias enough of non-Union shearers to disturb the price so determined. The Union men are, as a rule, young, strong and hardy, and many of them are splendid riders. Probably many of the New South Wales and Queensland troopers, who were so much admired in London for their fine physique and equally good horsemanship in the "Jubilee" procession of June last, had been shearers or boundary riders in their time.

Murrumburrah, some twenty miles beyond Cootamundra, on the Sydney line, is also a railway junction; a branch running north to Blayney connects with the main line from Sydney running north-west from the capital across the Blue Mountains and the plains to Bourke on the Darling river; a distance of near five hundred miles as the crow flies. I came down the country from Blayney to Murrumburrah, stopping at Cowra and Young, and driving a good deal of the way, the better to see the districts I went through; and brief references to these places will be more in order when I take my readers with me from Sydney to Dubbo on the central route just referred to. The traveller who comes overland from Melbourne will want to go to Sydney to see the capital before visiting more western portions of the colony, and we will for that reason continue on the main line from Albury on to Sydney. When at Murrumburrah we are still over 200 miles from the capital. This locality is also reckoned a splendid farm-

ing district. A comparatively large number of the farmers are Irish, and own their holdings. It is not, therefore, a place where land nationalization has many advocates or friends among the cultivators. This probably explains why the member for the district warmly opposed Mr. Reid's Land Tax Bill which, however, has become law since then.

About forty miles beyond Murrumburrah we come to Yass, another of these prosperous agricultural towns, with rich and extensive plains all round, free from timber and with land too good to be devoted to such an extent to pastoralist purposes. There is a most enjoyable drive from this flourishing town to the Murrumbidgee river, some ten miles across the plains. The landscape is very striking, with a range of mountains rising beyond the river and the rich rolling country stretching away to the north. The river comes down a deep valley, lined with gums and wattle trees, and the descent from the plains down a zigzag road cut in the side of the defile revealed at every turn changing views of the most pleasing river scenery.

Here would be an ideal place for a Labour Settlement if the New South Wales government wished to give a fair trial to such a plan for helping to solve the unemployed problem at Sydney. The land is excellent, the river is available for irrigation, and a Labour village would have a fair chance of doing well under such favourable conditions if its members were carefully selected for the work and the government did its part, as has been done in similar experiments in New Zealand and South Australia.

From Yass to Goulburn, a distance of some fifty miles, the country alternates between gum forest and cleared sheep walks. The pretty wattle tree is seen in great abundance along the route, and makes a fine show with its laburnum-like flower, forming a bright golden fringe round the dark green of the gum trees. The wattle is difficult to propagate, I believe, and will not stand transplanting. It grows best from seeds.

Goulburn is one of the largest inland cities of New South Wales. It boasts of cathedrals, colleges, schools, and various other notable institutions, among them being a prison, which I did not visit. The city has a commanding situation beneath some hills, while there is an extensive grazing and farming country all round it. It has always been a famed wheat-growing district. There are a great number of flourishing industries in addition to those indicated carried on in the city, and these give it a comparatively large wage-earning population. Its municipal and other public buildings, its wide and well-planned streets and



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general busy, business, and go-ahead appearance bespeak a rich and progressive centre, which is bound to expand in population and prosperity from the natural resources available around it.

I made no stoppage from Goulburn to Sydney, a journey of a hundred miles through a country possessing no remarkable features, though with plenty of good land and one or two towns and some villages on the way.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### SYDNEY

SYDNEY is in a fortunate contrast with Melbourne in the matter of entrances. Whether you arrive by sea or land the approaches are as delightful as those leading to the rival city are the reverse. Coming in from the Pacific Ocean you pass between the high and frowning sea cliffs of The Heads; a narrow passage about a mile wide, cut through the rocks as if done by some huge engineering feat in order to unite the ocean with the waters of the lovely Parramatta river. Once inside you have all the surpassing beauty of Sydney Harbour before you. If you arrive from Victoria you pass through several suburban districts before reaching the city, and see gardens and groves and handsome residences without number, with nothing displeasing to the eye on either hand. Then the incoming from the west brings you down the Blue Mountains and over the Emu plains, and you get a taste of Sydney's very attractive surroundings as you pass by Parramatta; while the journey from Queensland in the far north to the capital takes you over the Hawkesbury river, and from that to the city you find it no easy task to recall anything lovelier in nature until you think you discover it in "Our Harbour."

As this will be the first proposal made to you on reaching Sydney, you may as well see the great lion at once and place your admiration of it on record.

This far-famed harbour has been a subject for many descriptive pens and the theme of a generous praise, but all admiring travellers are not in accord as to its claims to pre-eminent rank in the world of beauteous scenery. John Mitchell, with more patriotism than justice, gave it a second place to Lough Swilley. It was, I think, George Augustus Sala who confessed himself puzzled between the rival charms of Hobart, Colombo, Naples, and Sydney Harbours. When all are alike captivating in special and local features, it is no easy matter to award the palm for the greatest number of all-

round or ascending structures. There is a view of almost everything else that might be met in any part of the world. I once heard a well-travelled Englishman say that a view from the summit of the Royal Palace in a bright summer day, embraced a more complete and more pleasing picture of nature, in combination with more art, than anything that he had ever seen in Switzerland or in the Alps. This is John Mitchell, my more so. It is not possible to understand an eye influenced by the natural and subtle lines of beauty and the haunting and healing influence of such associations, a forgiveable prejudice surely, but not calculated to make an impartial judge where such landscape regulations are at stake.

Love of scenery ought of course to be exempt from national feeling, and be thoroughly cosmopolitan. Lough Swilley challenges comparison with many better-known European combined land and sea views, though I would not the prospect from Killiney Hill near Dublin, before the Ulster one in the glorious variety of islands, headlands, bays, and curving coast-line comprised within the vista extending from Lambay to Wicklow Head. These are scenes with peculiarly local lines of beauty and colour. The views of sea and coast from Killiney Hill come nearer to those seen from Mount Carmel in Palestine, looking out upon the Mediterranean, than anything that meets the eye when it feasts upon Sydney Harbour. The Bay of Naples has its special or local lines of beauty, too, with surroundings altogether unique, as seen from the Castle of St. Elmo, and taking in the sweep of vision from Ischia to Vesuvius. Colombo, in my humble judgment, is not entitled to rank with any of the places mentioned, and could not, in a scenic sense, "hold a candle" to Sydney Harbour, Hobart, or Naples. Take the scenery of Australia on the merits of its own settings, skies, colours, and characteristics, and the most eulogistic language becomes faint and feeble to do it justice. When, as on a tour like mine, you have to recall visions of moonlight sailings up and down amidst the thousand islands that fringe the coral-reef-guarded shores of Queensland; dreams of the Derwent and the Tamar in Tasmania; of the Hawkesbury in this colony; recollections of rides over the Otira Gorge, and of coaching through the Buller Gorge on the west coast of New Zealand, together with the final photographs left on one's memory after standing on Mount Eden, at Auckland, and revelling in a kind of epitomised picture of all that is beautiful and grand in the choicest scenery of the seven colonies; how absurdly futile the warmest language of praise becomes



which attempts to do the barest descriptive justice to each country's landscape marvels! When trying to perform this task I am reminded of Lamartine's wish, as expressed in his delightful *Voyage en Orient*, when, on reaching Balbec and gazing upon the wonderful ruins of its fallen beauty and greatness, he longed for a language that could express in a single word all that the eye took in at a glance!

It is only in an impossible tongue of this kind that one could translate his impressions when attempting to write of Sydney Harbour and of other gems of Australian scenery. From the first view that arrests the eye after you enter from the Pacific through the narrow inlet between The Heads, until you reach the mouth of the Parramatta river, it is all a continuous feast of enchanting water and landscape views. The harbour is like a string of lovely lakes running into innumerable small bays on each shore, with projecting headlands covered with villas and trees on the north, and with the city proper on the south side of the water. There is no other such situation for a city anywhere, and were there only a hill like Mount Lofty or Mount Wellington (Hobart) rising up behind Burwood, on the south, or back of Balmain, on the north shore, there would be a site for a country's capital at the junction of the Parramatta and the sea in Port Jackson such as no other spot on earth could parallel or provide. The site of Sydney has this one defect only, in a scenic sense. In every other respect it is gemmed and adorned in Nature's most lavish but regulated order with islands and promontories, inlets, bays, and river-openings. It is all in such a corresponding conformation of land and wood and water that the genius of Fairyland would be puzzled how to add another bit of beauty to so complete a picture as that which intoxicates the eye from any point on either shore high enough to command the whole glorious panorama from the Parramatta to Manly Beach. The distance from these extremes is some fifteen miles, and the depth of water is such that it is navigable for large ships all the way. The harbour is therefore a combination of loveliness and utility, giving to the capital of the colony a location of incomparable natural charm, and a port which will accommodate the largest vessels that can link it with the trade and commerce of the world.

Sydney itself has not Melbourne's stately look in streets or in palatial public buildings. As far, however, as the natural difficulties of the central portion of the site would permit, and early blundering plans would allow, it is, as it stands to-day, a most

attractive city and worthy of its beautiful surroundings. The original planning of the place was, I believe, the work of soldiers rather than of civilians. Streets of wide width run from the west and north in the early days made regular tracks in the marshes and the water-side. Houses first and then streets followed in the same line of march. This arrangement has not been much disturbed by any later municipal sense, and the streets remain as the early settlers marked many of them out. From the railway terminus, near the district known as the Sney Hills, the chief streets run almost straight down towards the water, between the inlets of Darling Harbour and Macquarie Bay, with small intersecting streets crossing at right angles. The leading thoroughfares are baptised in the most "local" manner possible—George Street, after some of the various kings of that name; Pitt Street, Elizabeth Street, and Castlereagh Street: names given doubtless by the early city fathers to suggest a city founded by law-makers and not by law-breakers, or perhaps to carry favour with some of the all-powerful governors of the anti-Home Rule period. The Scottish martyrs to democratic principles, Mr. Palmer, Margaret, and Skirving could have been remembered without any municipal indecorum by rulers of Sydney when its streets were being named. These men were among the real founders of the city and of the colony, a fact of which both should feel proud: and as heroic pioneers of reform they deserved far more recognition in new and unfettered countries than the potentates and persecutors of the old ones, whose names flaunt in the eyes of the democratic capital of to-day the flunkeyism of a spiritless people and period.

There are several very fine buildings in George Street, notably the Town Hall and the General Post Office, probably the two most imposing-looking public structures in Australasia. The palace-like Post Office runs almost the whole length of a wide by-street, running between George and Pitt Streets, the entire side of the building being a continuous colonnade of striking beauty and design. There are a great number of handsome churches scattered over the city, some of them—especially St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral—being equal in architectural finish and appearance to the best of (the newest) European great churches. St. Mary's has cost, I believe, over £100,000. Its interior is somewhat disappointing, but its conspicuous situation on one of the highest hills of the city makes it one of Sydney's most striking landmarks. Banks, insurance offices, and a few leading business houses are built on a richer scale of taste and

cost than what generally obtains in English cities. There are three or four hotels about which the same observations cannot be made. Both Melbourne and Sydney are alike in this respect. The comparative smallness and inferiority of style of their hotels, as compared with those of American cities, are very marked. In this matter Australia cannot be said to resemble the United States.

In parks, reserves, gardens, walks, and promenades the city is lavishly furnished, while holiday seekers have the choice of a bewildering number of enticing places along the indented coasts of the harbour and in the sylvan stretches of the Parramatta and Hawkesbury rivers. No city in the world is so well provided with places of pleasurable resort, and the people of Sydney make the most of the goods the gods have given them. Excursions, picnics, drives, outings seem to go on all the year round; the winter in Sydney being in our summer months, and about equal to the weather we enjoy in April and May. The people impress you as a light-hearted, jolly, make-life-pleasant race, very fond of sporting and given to gaiety, glad of any excuse for a holiday, wishful to please the stranger, and opening wide for him the portals of a warm and whole-hearted hospitality.

Sydney strikes you as being a more "live" city than Melbourne. Its streets are narrower and more irregular, and this may account to some extent for the more congested traffic and the busier aspect of the principal thoroughfares. There is more animation in the streets both by day and night, while the volume of business activity that forces its notice upon you from the wharves to the suburbs suggests a comparison with Liverpool or Glasgow rather than with the capital of Victoria. Of course New South Wales has a slightly larger population than the sister colony, and its commercial capital has a much bigger country behind it. The coal of Newcastle (N. S. W.) brings a great sea traffic nearer to Sydney.

The nominal customs duties of the colony's Free Trade policy, with the splendid harbour accommodation offered to the largest ships afloat, also give to Sydney great commercial advantages over the rival capital on the Yarra with its protectionist tariffs and trammels. These are, however, matters of opinion and dispute. People will be found in Sydney to agree with the contentions of Melbourne protectionists that conditions and trade are better in Victoria, and that Free Trade will ultimately spell ruin to the senior colony. The confusion of statistics will be invoked behind opposing views, and the bewildered stranger can

only form his own conclusion under, perhaps, the guidance of similar biased convictions.

In both Sydney and Melbourne you also find the contrast between riches and indigence, which is so familiar a feature of the cities of the old countries. To this extent, at least, the new ones, with all their gold mines and land and seeming boundless natural resources, with only a sprinkling of people to share them, have failed to solve the economic riddle of wealth and progress yoked to poverty. The contrast is not as sharp, it is true, as with our European cities. The number of those actually destitute is not so large in proportion to people as in Dublin, Manchester, or other old country centres corresponding in population with Sydney. But the poor and the unemployed are there all the same, and charity organizations, soup-kitchens, relief committees, and all the ordinary media of European methods for coping with starvation among the poor are in all but constant working order.

I went out one night while in Sydney to witness the distribution of food to the unemployed. I had just come in from the south-western country with its rich soil, huge sheep and cattle ranches, and widely resourceful possibilities. It was an amazing contrast. Millions of acres of fruitful land, capable of growing anything, on the one hand, practically idle; and a crowd of men, most of them young, sitting on the kerb-stones of a street near the centre of so wealthy a city, awaiting their turn to go to the door of a charitable society to beg a meal for the night! And it was by no means a casual sight or an incident confined to Sydney. Similar scenes are witnessed in Melbourne, while in Adelaide, Hobart, and Brisbane, with their relatively smaller populations, the same condition of things prevails on a corresponding scale at periods of the year when employment may be slack. All this is sadly disappointing, and it seems so horribly out of place in countries containing beyond question resources enough in its soil alone to feed half the world if enough of workers could be put upon the land. There are, of course, men in cities like Sydney who will not work if loafing can be made to provide them with food. These are found in all cities, and they are the likeliest section of a large community to attract a visitor's attention.

Sydney rightly honours the memory of two of the early governors of New South Wales with monumental testimonies of grateful esteem: Governor Macquarie, for his many great services to the new country in its transition stage from an infant

Crown colony to a self-governing state ; and Sir Richard Bourke, an Irishman, who was Australia's greatest governor. He it was who really laid the foundation for constitutional rule. Wentworth, the son of an Irishman, and Bourke are the fathers of Australian liberty. The first public statue ever erected in Australia was in Governor Bourke's honour.

For parliamentary purposes Sydney proper is divided into three divisions—east, west, and south—each being entitled to return four members to the Legislative Assembly.

In the municipal rule of the city there are no councillors. They are all aldermen, twenty-four in number; three each being elected on a property qualification for eight wards. The Mayor is not elected direct by the burgesses' votes as in Adelaide, but by the aldermen, from among themselves, as in London.

The city claims to have a population, counting suburbs, of over 400,000 ; an area, also including suburbs, of 120 square miles ; and the annual value of its property to be over £5,600,000.

## CHAPTER III

### "LARRIKIN" LANGUAGE

YOU notice at once while mixing with the people who crowd the street scenes at night, or when observing them in their vocations in the daytime, what a variety of races there are mixed up in Sydney's four hundred thousand of a population. Nearly all the Eastern and European races are seen—Chinese, Japs, Cingaleses, Malays, Indonesians, Italians, French, Spaniards, and, occasionally among the crowd of Irish.

"The eyes and the noses  
Familiar to persons  
Named 'Lar' and 'Muss'."

The Briton and the Celt predominate, of course, and the Australian edition is, I think, a physical improvement upon the parent product. The brown tint of the skin, due to the sub-tropical climate, marks the transition in colour from the European to the Asiatic in a somewhat startling fashion, and causes you to wonder whether this climatic process will go on until the white race loses that colour distinction in eastern Australia.

Sydney and Melbourne have their "Larrikin" language, just as London has its "slang" vocabulary. Australian slang is a combination of that of England with idioms of colonial growth, and some American terms thrown in. There are a few phrases and by-names peculiar to each colony, due to purely local origin, but the main body of Australian slang is intercolonial, and varies very little in the large cities of the seven countries. A writer in one of the Sydney weekly papers has very cleverly compiled a rhyming glossary of the "Slanguage" of the antipodes in the following verses:—

"'T is the every-day Australian  
Has a language of his own,  
Has a language or a slanguage  
Which can simply stand alone.  
And 'dichen pitch to kid us'  
Is a synonym for 'lie,'  
And to 'nark it' means to stop it,  
And to 'nit it' means to fly!



## NEW SOUTH WALES

- " And a bosom friend 's a 'cobber'  
 And a horse a 'prad' or 'moke,'  
 While a casual acquaintance  
 Is a 'joker' or a 'bloke.'  
 And his lady love 's his 'donah,'  
 Or his 'clinah' or his 'tart,'  
 Or his 'little bit o' muslin,'  
 As it used to be his 'bart.'
- " And his naming of the coinage  
 Is a mystery to some,  
 With his 'quid' and 'half-a-caser,'  
 And his 'deener' and his 'scrum'!  
 And a 'tin-back' is a party  
 Who 's remarkable for luck,  
 And his food is called his 'tucker,'  
 Or his 'panum' or his 'chuck.'
- " A policeman is a 'johnny,'  
 Or a 'copman' or a 'trap,'  
 And a thing obtained on credit  
 Is invariably 'strap.'  
 A conviction 's known as 'trouble,'  
 And a gaol is called a 'jug,'  
 And a sharper is a 'spieler,'  
 And a simpleton 's a 'mug.'
- " If he hits a man in fighting  
 That is what he calls a 'plug,'  
 If he borrows money of you  
 He will say he 'bit your lug.'  
 And to 'shake it' is to steal it,  
 And to 'strike it' is to beg,  
 And a jest is 'poking borac,'  
 And a jester 'pulls your leg.'
- " Things are 'cronk' when they go wrongly  
 In the language of the 'push,'  
 But when things go as he wants 'em  
 He declares it is 'all cush.'  
 When he 's bright he 's got a 'napper,'  
 But he 's 'ratty' when he 's daft,  
 And when looking for employment  
 He is 'out o' blooming graft.'
- " And his clothes he calls his 'clobber,'  
 Or his 'togs,' but what of that  
 When a 'castor' or a 'kady'  
 Is the name he gives his hat?  
 And our undiluted English  
 Is a fad to which we cling,  
 But the great Australian slanguage  
 Is a truly awful thing!"



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE FOUNDERS OF SYDNEY

I REMEMBER being warned by travelled friends when leaving for Australia not to make mention of "Botany Bay" while in New South Wales, or to refer to convicts when in Tasmania. The feeling against offending which this advice was tendered is a ridiculous one. Of all human absurdities that of a vanity suffering injury from reflections upon the standing or character of ancestors who lived a century ago is about the most senseless. Sydney can easily console itself with the reflection that all great empires, and most great cities, have been founded in crime of some kind. An honest history of kingdoms and conquests would be a story of triumphant vice rather than of struggling and successful virtue. The immortal author of *Robinson Crusoe*, himself a sturdy Englishman, offers some solace to the senior colony and to Tasmania in the sentiments expressed in his "True-born Englishman." Scornfully rebuking the pride of England's ancestral glorification, he says:—

"These are the heroes who despise the Dutch  
And rail at new-come foreigners so much ;  
Forgetting that themselves are all derived  
From the most scoundrel race that ever lived—  
A horrid crowd of rambling thieves and drones !  
• • • • •

"From our Fifth Henry's time the strolling bands  
Of banished fugitives from neighb'ring lands  
Have here a certain sanctuary found,  
The eternal refuge of the vagabond.  
Where in but half a common age of time,  
Borrowing new blood and manners from the clime,  
Proudly they learn all mankind to contemn—  
And all their race are True-born Englishmen !"

The men who founded Sydney and the great country which is some day to become the Commonwealth of Australia, may have been convicted prisoners, but they were not necessarily

"criminals" such as we are familiar with to-day. Some account must be taken of what constituted a crime in those transportation days, and of the hideously unjust sentences which were inflicted for comparatively trivial offences. The law and its judges have often been the only real criminals against justice in processes of condemning men to the gaol or the gibbet, and it is impossible to read of the trials which took place in Great Britain and Ireland a generation or two ago without arriving at this conclusion in numberless instances. Then the guilt that was brought home to accused persons was measured by the savage legal customs of the time, and not by any enlightened process of comparative criminality. To burn a man alive for issuing base coin, or to hang a person for snaring a rabbit, would to-day destroy a law or judge or government that could attempt such atrocities against justice. Yet such deeds were done "in the name of law" in England before Governor Philip had erected the first building inside Port Jackson. The criminals of the period were mainly a class of persons who were the product of the changes effected in the industrial life of England through the after social and economic consequences of the Reformation. The destruction of the monasteries; the taking away of land and revenues from which the poor and the unemployed derived some sustenance in times of distress; the absence of any real system of poor relief as a substitute for the help that was never denied to distress at a convent gate, generated the social conditions which bred and fostered crimes against property a century ago. How these crimes were punished is known to every student of the history of those periods. There is no judge so severe in punishing an offence against property as the man who has possessed himself of what belongs to another. All the ten commandments are then too weak for the condemnation of the petty thief who robs some remnant of the belongings of the successful one. Men who stole an estate after the confiscation of the monastic lands were ennobled. Those who stole a sheep or snared a hare on such properties were hung or transported. This was the law and order of those times, and it was out of a few generations of such a condition of society in England the vast majority of those offences arose which helped to people with their freight of convicted prisoners the ships which Governor Philip sailed with in 1787 from London to Botany Bay.

It can easily be believed, after reading the views which Pitt and public men and writers of a century ago expressed on the needs of the new colony, that such prisoners were selected for



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Governor Philip as were identified with agriculture and pastoralist pursuits: labourers, poachers, country joskins, tramps, and other rural offenders against property. Town and city criminals would be of no use in the work that lay before the first consignment of convicts to Botany Bay, and it is safe to assume that such were not transported in the earlier stages of the new system of sending the enemies of the law beyond the seas.

In all probability there were prisoners sent from Ireland in those early days, of a class of which the colony of to-day has no cause to feel ashamed. They were, as I will show, transported for offences most of which had little or no moral stigma attached to them. Of course all the criminals deported from Ireland in those and subsequent years were not of the "Whiteboy" or "Thresher" type. The country produced its quota (then, as now, however, a relatively small one) of thieves, but the vast majority of the offences committed in Ireland then were (as they are to this day) of an agrarian character. They were, of course, reprehensible, bad, and all the rest, if you will, but traceable, all the same, to provocative land laws, abominable social conditions, and, in those penal law periods, to the law-made disorder of the tithesystem and its administration. Exceptional crimes, doubtless, marked the troubled times as well. Excesses were committed for which little if any palliation can be found, even in those penal-law infamies of the time; but these also were largely attributable to a system of legal savagery which nothing but miracles could prevent from engendering in the minds of an impulsive people an equal spirit of criminal retaliation.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### IRELAND'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INFANT COLONY

IN a report of the proceedings of a special Commission for Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Longford, and Cavan, held in Sligo in 1806, the following definitions are found of the objects of certain secret societies, which had been in existence for a generation under various names. The members of these bodies were tried under the Whiteboy Act, a portion of which law is in force in Ireland to-day. These special Commissions were of frequent occurrence, and the penalties referred to in the following extracts had been inflicted upon "Whiteboys" and "Threshers" before the date of the sailing of the *Sirius* and the first transportation ships in 1787. The extracts are from the speech of the Attorney-General for Ireland, delivered to the jury against peasants charged with being members of the "Threshers," and with intimidating people from paying tithes :—

"It is unfortunately too notorious that for some time past the peace of the country has been infested by a set of persons assuming the name of Threshers. Their outrageous associations have been in direct defiance of the law; men who are not placed in any situation, either by the conventions of society or their own fitness, entitling them to dictate to their fellow-subjects, or to take upon themselves the task of reformation and of legislation. These persons have discovered that the existing laws are not to their mind—they have found out that there are errors in the state and in the church, and they have conceived that they are the proper persons to undertake the task of reforming them. . . . The pretext upon which these illegal confederacies is formed is a repugnance to the payments in support of the legal establishment of the church of the country, and also of the fees which have been usually paid, without any law to enforce them, to the clergymen of the Catholic persuasion."

Having thus defined the nature of these associations and the character of their crime, he went on to explain the penalties which "Threshers" incurred in their illegal methods for reform :—

"In the various forms and associations under which their designs have been conducted it has been the policy of these people to administer oaths to the



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persons called upon by them, binding them to association and to secrecy. This offence is by law punished with death. The person who commits it must pay the forfeit of his life. The person taking such an oath is banished for ever from this country. The mere circumstance of going to a magistrate and telling him of the oath being taken will not absolve the party; the oath must be taken against his will, for if it be taken voluntarily he is, notwithstanding such information, liable to be transported for life."

And then with a fine flow of forensic oratory against the French Revolution the Attorney-General denounced the rude and impious "Thresher" reformers in these words:—

"Gentlemen, it is no wonder that those who searched after democratical equality should be the foes of religion. Religion is the genuine equality of mankind; it is the poor man's friend; during the troubles of this life it renders him content with the lot of inferiority which is the condition of his nature, and in the last awful hour of existence it puts him upon a level with the highest and most exalted."

The "religion" thus defined and defended in pious lawyer's language being the punctual payment of tithes to a church to which the people did not belong!

It was for belonging to illegal bodies like the "Whiteboys," "Threshers," "Steelboys," and similar societies, and their opposition to tithes, landlordism, and social tyranny that thousands of Irish peasants were transported beyond the seas at the latter end of the last and the early years of the present century. That many of those were among the early shipments of prisoners to Botany Bay is certain; and among the convicts who may be said to have laid the foundations of Sydney and of the whole colonial system of Australia were humble Irish reformers, for whom sympathy and not shame must be felt.

Following the "Rising" of 1798 large numbers of men, suspected of having been out in the rebellion, were shipped off to Port Jackson and Norfolk Island. General Holt, the Wicklow rebel leader, relates in his memoirs that one hundred and thirty prisoners sailed in the ship which took him away in August, 1799, most of the prisoners being from Wexford and the other few Leinster counties that had been prominent in the insurrectionary movement.

It is a very interesting incident to find Holt welcomed on his arrival at Sydney by Margarot, the Scotch reformer, who with Muir, Palmer, and others had been tried in Edinburgh in 1794 for the compound crime of having advocated universal suffrage and lauded George Washington. *The Annual Register* for that year records that on the 25th of October "the *Surprise* transport



arrived at Sydney from England, whence she sailed on the 2nd of May last, having on board, among other prisoners, Messrs. Muir, Palmer, Skirving, and Margarot, four gentlemen lately convicted in Scotland of the crime of sedition, and transported for the same to this country." I relate briefly elsewhere the story of Muir's rescue, as told by Marcus Clarke, by a vessel expressly fitted out for that purpose by George Washington, who had manifested a keen interest in the fate of the young and accomplished Scottish patriot. Holt tells how "Mr. Margarot received me with kindness and hospitality. He had seen me from his garden come ashore, and sent his servant to meet me. He was a man of great conversational powers and of literary acquirements, while his wife was of the same rank and character, a lady of elegant manners."

So many were the Irish political prisoners in "Botany Bay" in 1799-1800 that a plot for the overthrow of governor Hunter and his authority and the seizure of the infant colony was organized by them. Crofton Croker, in his life of Holt, quotes Barrington's account of this conspiracy among the deported Irish rebels: "The governor, in the beginning of May, received information from the officers that they had some grounds for suspecting that the convicts from Ireland had brought with them the principles which occasioned their being sent out of the kingdom, and were holding seditious correspondence and unlawful meetings. To discover whether there was any foundation for this he called in the assistance of some officers and magistrates, when it was determined to make a general search among the persons suspected in all parts of the colony at the same time, and to secure and seal up their papers." The information given to the governor was that "prisoners lately sent from Ireland for sedition and being concerned in the late rebellion had formed a plan for gaining possession of the colony, and that pikes had been made for that purpose." Holt, who was arrested on suspicion of being concerned in the plot, admits that a few men approached him with a suggestion of the kind as a means of possible escape from their servitude and degradation. He was himself deported to Norfolk Island in consequence of this suspicion, but not before he was witness to some of the penalties inflicted upon others who had probably been more actively in the plot than himself. He relates as follows how it fared with some of the men who were either implicated or refused to give information that would incriminate their comrades.

It is a horrible story, but its details, however revolting, go to



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confirm what Marcus Clarke's book has been denounced by some critics for proving—the systematic torturing of prisoners in the old convict days by the gang of official ruffians who had them in charge:—

“One man,” says Holt, “named Maurice Fitzgerald, was sentenced to receive three hundred lashes, and the method of punishment was such as to make it most effectual. The unfortunate man had his arms extended round a tree, his two wrists tied with cords, and his breast pressed closely to the tree, so that finching from the blow was out of the question, for it was impossible for him to stir. Father Harold was ordered to put his hand against the tree by the hands of the prisoner, and two men were appointed to flog, one of them being the hangman from Sydney. They stood on each side of Fitzgerald, and I never saw two threshers in a barn move their flails with more regularity than these two man-killers, unmoved by pity, and rather enjoying their horrid employment than otherwise. The first blows made the blood spout out from Fitzgerald's shoulders. I have witnessed many horrible scenes, but this was the most appalling sight I had ever seen. The day was windy, and I protest that although I was at least fifteen yards to leeward the blood and flesh blew in my face as the executioners shook it off from their ‘cats.’ Fitzgerald received his whole three hundred lashes, Dr. Mason regularly feeling his pulse. I shall never forget this humane doctor, as he smiled and said, ‘Go on, this man will tire you both before he fails.’ During the time Fitzgerald was receiving the punishment he never uttered a groan. The only words he uttered were, ‘Flog me fair, don't strike me on the neck!’ When it was over two constables took him by the arm to help him into the cart. He told them to let his hands go, and struck each of them in the pit of the stomach with his elbows and knocked both of them down. He then stepped into the cart unassisted, the doctor remarking, ‘That man has strength enough to bear two hundred more lashes.’

“The next prisoner who was tied up in the same way was Paddy Galvin, a young lad about twenty years of age. He was also sentenced to receive three hundred lashes. The first hundred were given on his shoulders, and he was so cut that the shoulder-blades were laid bare. The doctor then directed the next hundred to be inflicted lower down, which reduced his flesh to such a jelly that the doctor ordered him to have the remaining hundred on the calves of his legs. Galvin never whimpered or finched. He was asked ‘where the pikes were hid.’ He answered that he did not know, and that if he did he would not tell. He was put into a cart and sent to the hospital. Three other prisoners then received each one hundred lashes.”\*

Sir Roger Therry, in his *History of New South Wales*, deals in a just and appreciative spirit with the careers of the transported “ninety-eight” men, and bears testimony to the worth and character of them as subsequent settlers in the colony. Some of them attained to great wealth. He says:—

“I might easily enumerate the names of quite a legion of these exiles (for whose errors on account of unjust laws that ground them down no generous

\* *Memoirs of Holt*, by CROFTON CROKER, vol. ii. pp. 118-122.

mind can refuse them sympathy) who became eminently prosperous in New South Wales, and whose children there are now the inheritors of large estates in land and numerous flocks of sheep and herds of cattle."

The author tells how he once came across a tombstone and an inscription, in journeying through the colony, which called forth sentiments that are a credit to a liberal-minded judge and Englishman. The story is a touching one, and may recall in the coming year the names of the heroes of it to the grateful memories of their fellow-countrymen. Sir Roger writes:—

"There may be weakness—perhaps indiscretion—in avowing those emotions of pity I felt for the fate of these men, not unmingled with condemnation of the Irish rulers of that day, who were, in no small degree, responsible for involving them in that fate, on the occasion of a visit I paid to a small cemetery crowning a gentle eminence in Australia, when I saw there a humble tombstone, on which was engraved this inscription. I quote from memory:—

" 'Here lye in one grave Patrick O'Connor and Denis Bryan, shipmates in the *Boyd*. Transported from Ireland in 1799, and compatriots in arms at the memorable Battle of Vinegar Hill.'

"These attached friends—the Damon and Pythias of humble life—on becoming free purchased a valuable farm on the alluvial banks of the Cow-pasture river. After the death of one, by arrangement, it passed into the possession of the survivor, and when it became his turn 'to shake off this mortal coil,' he devised it for the religious and educational advantage of the religious community of which he and his 'compatriot in arms' were members.

"On visiting the church of St. Pietro in Montorio, at Rome, many years afterwards, as I stood upon the ornamented and tessellated pavement, and gazed on the spot where repose the ashes of the Earl of Tyrconnel and Baron Dungannon, who died in exile in Rome in 1608, and there read that 'they were brave and valorous men, often engaged in paths of danger in defence of their patrimony and faith,' my mind strayed back to the unadorned stone and homely inscription that marked the humble grave of Bryan and O'Connor in the little cemetery at the antipodes—their fate a common one—exiles from their native land—sufferers alike in the same cause, that cause the resistance to laws which Mr. Burke truly designated as 'the worst and most wicked that ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man.'"

Another Englishman has left the testimony of an equally generous impression of their personal worth and of the sincerity of their devotion to what he considered their desperate cause. Captain Eastwick, in his autobiography written half a century ago, which has been recently published by Mr. Fisher Unwin, in his "Adventure Series," under the title of *A Master Mariner*, relates the story of the attempted insurrection mentioned by Holt, and tells of the terrible consequences which followed to those who had been more actively implicated than the men who were flogged on suspicion. The honest old English salt writes:—



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"Toward the end of my stay at Sydney the Croppies, who had been sent out for complicity in the Irish rebellion of 1798, and who belonged to all ranks of society, rose in mutiny one night in the hope of overcoming the colony and gaining their freedom and independence. Hitherto those misguided men had behaved very well. In fact, from the time they had surrendered in Ireland, on the condition of their lives being spared, they had appeared reconciled to their fate. I had heard a good deal about them from my friend Captain Reid, of the *Friendship*, when I met him in Calcutta before this voyage. He had been chartered to convey these United Irishmen (as they called themselves) to Botany Bay from Waterford, and declared that their demeanour on board had been very much to their credit. In the colony they had been treated with as much consideration as the law allowed, but in spite of this they began, after a time, to find their position intolerable.

"They had, moreover, got a fixed idea into their heads that on the other side of the Blue Mountains, which are a few miles out from Sydney, there was a settlement of white people, and several of them had been so deluded as to concert means for reaching it. Two or three parties had absconded a few months before the time of this outbreak, of whom the greater portion had gone in quest of this imaginary settlement, and many had been found in the bush after trying to prolong life by subsisting on grass. Others had been killed by the blacks, while two, at least, were known to have joined the natives, to live with them. One party had returned to the sea-coast, and under cover at night cut out the schooner *Norfolk* and sailed out to sea; but being followed and captured, were all hung for pirates—to such an end had their mad and unconsidered undertakings carried them. But the fate of these adventurers was no warning to those left behind. The idea of the white settlement was unshaken, and they determined to reach it and be free.

"It was to achieve this end that they laid a well-concerted plan by which they obtained possession of a large quantity of arms, some of which had been hidden for many weeks, and, having chosen leaders of their own, and formed a design of attack, they collected together one night to the number of at least 1000 in formidable resistance to the authority of the government."

How this attempt failed has already been related. Captain Eastwick tells how it became his duty to take Holt, who was suspected of complicity in the conspiracy, to Norfolk Island. This is how Holt began his new imprisonment:—

"At this place he was very finely dressed on landing in a new blue coat, with a black velvet collar, like a gentleman should be—which he was, every inch of him—and he sat with dignity in the stern-sheets. On the shore was a large truck waiting, with fourteen prisoners to drag it, who had been landed just previously, and among them Captain the Hon. St. Ledger, and some others who had been men of fortune in Ireland. The jailer, standing by them, perceived General Holt in the stern-sheets of the approaching boat, and called out to the coxswain to ask who he was. 'General Holt,' came the reply. Then the uncouth man cried out: 'D—n the General. Let Holt assist to unload the boat; put the biggest bag of sugar on his back, for he appears a big man in his own estimation.' This was done, and the General, all in his fine clothes, laden like a common felon, was forced to wade a long way through the water, the boat, from its draught, being unable to come close to the landing-place."

This brutal treatment aroused the Englishman's indignation. He says:—

“It was a sorry sight to see so gallant a gentleman submit himself to these vulgar people in authority, and with a silent dignity obey the order given him. For, after all, he and many other prisoners were gentlemen by birth—such as Counsellor Sutton, Dr. McCullom, and Mr. Brennan, who held the situation of High Sheriff of the County of Wexford, and Mr. Lysaght, a man of considerable property in Ireland, all forfeited to the Crown. They were persons of refinement, whose only crime was a love of their native island, and a desire for its freedom. Had they been Englishmen this would have been highly esteemed. Nevertheless for this feeling, which I hold would do any patriotic person positive credit, they were condemned to transportation and treated as common criminals. I had been in daily contact with them for the last fortnight (for I had berthed them aft in my cabin, instead of with the common prisoners between decks), and I never heard any sentiment pass their lips except such as I could commend. They spoke of their wrongs and their disappointed hopes with resignation, but with an amazing eloquence that forced from me the tribute of sincere pity.”

A record, surely, of which all Irishmen can feel a keen pride, coming as it does with the added weight and enhanced value of an Englishman's honest tribute to such heroic sacrifices for Irish liberty. These men—or those of them who survived the barbarities of Norfolk Island—almost all remained in Australia after their release, and helped to build up the parent colony of New South Wales.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### THE EVOLUTION OF SELF-GOVERNMENT IN AUSTRALIA

ONE of the most interesting speculations a visitor from the old countries to New South Wales can indulge in is the extent to which political thought and action in this parent colony may possibly have been influenced by the writings and labours of reformers in Great Britain and Ireland. Such reflections are suggested not only by the seniority of this colony, but likewise by the intercourse which has necessarily existed between all the Australias at all times and the people "at home" from whom the colonists have been drawn. It was from Sydney that all the other colonies obtained their foundation and copied their constitutions. Those therefore who helped to mould the government and laws of New South Wales exercised a large indirect influence upon the builders of subsequent ruling systems in the seven self-governing countries we find to-day at the antipodes.

New South Wales had its forerunners of reform in the political prisoners who were transported from Scotland and Ireland shortly after the foundation of the colony. These martyrs to the principles of democracy and national government have got no historical credit for any share in the work of developing Home Rule out of the system of Downing Street domination which reigned at the antipodes for the first half of the century. Probably they were not active political propagandists during their convict careers, but it is reasonable to suppose that when liberated they were not indifferent to questions of popular liberty among fellow-colonists, or consumed with ultra-loyal sentiments towards the *régime* under which they had been subjected to so many degrading penalties for their confession of political faith.

Many of these prisoners were educated and cultured men. Thomas Muir, the Rev. Thomas Palmer—a Unitarian minister—with Messrs. Margarot, Skirving, and Gerald, "the Scottish martyrs," as they were described at the time, were ardent reforming spirits who would not be likely to live silent or inactive as



"Port Jackson" began to assume the proportions of an organized community. Muir escaped, as related in another part of this book, by the aid of George Washington, and Palmer died on his way back to England. Margarot and the others remained for some years in Sydney; Skirving and Gerald dying there. Holt, the Wicklow rebel leader, relates, as already mentioned, how Mr. Margarot had extended a cordial welcome to himself and some Wexford companions on their landing at Port Jackson six years after the intrepid Scotch reformer had himself arrived there as a transported convict. On returning to his native land in 1815 Margarot became known as "the aboriginal reformer."

Among the transported "'98 rebels" from Ireland were many men of good position and educated parts, as instanced by Captain Eastwick in the work quoted from in the last chapter. Very few of these men, or of the hundreds of humble insurgents who shared their fate, returned after being liberated. They made New South Wales their home, and would, as colonists, be certain to become ardent advocates of colonial self-government. Descendants of these soldiers of liberty helped to develop the wealth and progress of the colony, and, we may be sure, did their share of the labour of preparing the way for the movement which achieved in the Fifties the successful establishment of the first Home Rule Constitution at the antipodes.

This first constitution planted in the Australias had very little of an Australian stamina in it. It was a cutting from the ancient Westminster tree at a time when popular influence in Great Britain had no power with which to engraft Liberal or Progressive ideas on the parent stem. The classes ruled supreme in both Houses, and incipient democracy found vent for its discontent in the Chartist movement. It was shortly after the stirring events of '48 in Great Britain and Ireland that the people of New South Wales resolved upon a demand for the fullest self-government from the Imperial Parliament. The character of the constitution thus asked for and that of the opposition which was given to some of its features in Sydney, illustrate the dual nature of the old-world influence, which was helping to shape the political destinies of the new states at the other end of the earth. Wentworth, a born Australian, wanted an Upper House with an Australian nobility for its membership. Parkes, a Radical colonist, with much of the Chartist spirit in his (then) political creed, denounced this attempt to plant a House of Lords in the constitutional soil of Australia, and with the aid of other colonists, English and Irish, succeeded in defeating the nobility

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part of the proposed Home Rule Legislature, but failed to make the Upper Chamber an elective body. It is a most curious illustration of the instability of political creeds to find Wentworth vainly lamenting, before he died, the part he played in giving his native country a nominated Second Chamber, while Parkes, the ultra-Radical and one-time semi-Republican, ended his political days as "Sir Henry."

William Charles Wentworth, son of an Irish doctor, was the popular tribune of New South Wales and the father of Australian Home Rule. Australia has not yet produced a greater statesman or more transparently honest patriot. He fought the petty despotism of governor Darling with courageous judgment, and if he erred in the matter of trying to reproduce an Australian copy of the House of Lords, it was the mistake of an honest mind afterwards sincerely regretted. His sojourn in England and education at Oxford occurred at a time when the Liberal thought which had sprung from the French Revolution received a great set-back by the Bourbon restoration and the triumph of Pitt's policy on the Continent, and in the destruction of the Irish Parliament. The naturally Liberal mind of young Wentworth had therefore nothing to learn from the spirit of the time but reactionary ideas. Like his great contemporary O'Connell, he was a Radical in his impulses, but an equally strong conservative in adhering to existing ruling systems; the result in both instances of the combined influence of a lawyer's profession and the nursing Toryism of a university's training.

Henry Parkes probably took with him to Sydney from the early life of a Warwickshire farm, and the later citizenship of Birmingham, as much of the spirit which subsequently begot the Chartist movement as Wentworth carried back with him of the Liberal-Conservatism of the previous decade. They were instances of classes and masses influence respectively. Parkes showed a strong Chartist spirit in his paper the *Empire*, in which, with the powerful aid of Lang, Gavan Duffy, Martin, Deniehy, and others, he combated for a wider popular liberty than the aspiring aristocrats of the colony and the Colonial Office in London wished to extend to New South Wales. English Radicalism in Lang and Parkes, and Irish Repealism in Duffy, Deniehy, and Martin were thus seen fighting against attempts to create a class of hereditary law makers such as Wentworth wished to establish. Outside this feature of the struggle for Colonial Home Rule, the movement for emancipating New South Wales from the Colonial Office was greatly helped by

the presence at the time of such a man as Governor Sir Richard Bourke, another Irishman of broad-minded and Liberal views. The assistance rendered by him at this juncture in the history of the parent colony was enormous, and it helped to hasten the time when the people of New South Wales took the reins of their destinies from London hands.

Subsequent to these developments, and in the colonies which were organized afterwards, clear traces of the transplanted Chartist spirit and of the principles underlying the Irish Repeal movement can be found in the laws and institutions of almost all the Australias. The present premier of New Zealand told me in an interview at Wellington that his first reforming sympathies were awakened by a Lancashire Chartist who hailed from the country of Feargus O'Connor. Several followers of O'Connor, Ernest Jones, and of Julian Harney are still met with in the colonies, who have abandoned none of their enthusiasm for the advanced democracy which Feargus O'Connor and his associates taught in their time. The labours of Gavan Duffy in remoulding the land laws of Victoria have been dealt with already. They may be said to have sown the seed for the progressive land legislation which now obtains in many of the colonies. Then, in the work of such men as Sir John O'Shaunessy, twice premier of New South Wales, and of Plunkett, of Roscommon, the avenger of the slaughtered aborigines, Ireland has again a claim, with English Chartism and Radicalism, to a share of the credit due to the architects of the existing monuments of popular government and enlightened laws, which challenge the envy of the visitor from the old and unprogressive countries.

Following these labours and times we have the speeches of Gladstone, Bright, and Cobden, which have also told upon the formation of opinion at the antipodes. One of the Australian premiers said in London this year that the colonial Legislatures were "laboratories of Liberal principles." That is one reason why you find many advanced ideas embodied in Australian laws which are still opposed at the older end of the world as impracticable and revolutionary.

Coming down to our own day it is easy to trace the effects of Henry George's visit to the colonies, and of the persuasive power of "Progress and Poverty" in the radical land reforms that have been carried out in New Zealand, South Australia, and New South Wales. Nor was the Land League movement in Ireland, and its resultant legislation in the Imperial Parliament, without effect upon the minds of law makers and others at the

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other end of the earth. At the present moment the words of *Morris England*, the able witness of Father Time, the words of John Morrison, Esq., and other propagandists of collective thought and principles in the other countries are being read by the Labour and Socialist leaders of the New South Wales, and are doubtless helping in some extent to permeate in various ways progressive mind movements which are in some Australian reforms to a still more advanced stage of democratic governmentship.

It is an interesting comment upon the low level of democratic power and prominence of Australian Labour Party, is that the feeling towards Republicanism, which was at one time assuming a strong popular tendency, giving way to the movement for social reform. Leaders of the working classes have however indulged with the spirit of the existing system when finding themselves admitted to the law-making labours of their colonies, and the workers have their minds occupied by the programme of industrial legislation which these leaders are trying to place in the statute books. Republicanism has therefore for the time taken an emphatic back seat, to emerge to the front again, possibly, as an anti-climax to the scheme of Australian Federation.

Speculations and reflections like these are suggested when the visitor to Sydney finds himself inside the New South Wales Legislature, within which the foundation was laid of the Home Rule system now guaranteeing the fullest self-governing liberty to the British and Celtic races of the Australia.



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### THE SYDNEY LEGISLATURE

EXCEPTING that of Western Australia, the Parliament House of the parent colony is the poorest-looking legislative edifice at the antipodes. The contrast between it and the palatial Sydney Town Hall is about equal to one between the Battersea Vestry Hall and the Palace of Westminster. The city fathers of the capital evidently rate the municipal dignity of Sydney much higher than the rulers of the colony appraise that of the country under their charge, if we may judge by the respective provisions made for Municipal and Parliamentary labours. There may be some good reason for this striking contrast, but it does not make itself apparent to the observing stranger. Internally both Houses of the Legislature are in keeping with the outside of the building. The chambers are very small, and call for very little vocal effort on the part of members to make themselves heard by Mr. Speaker or by each other.

The rules of debate and procedure are practically those which obtain in the House of Commons, only some rules which have been modified or abandoned in recent years at Westminster are still in force in this and other colonial Legislatures. The rule for moving the adjournment of the debate, which required only the volition of a single member up to a few years ago, and now demands the assent of forty in the House of Commons, is retained in its original form by all the Australian Parliaments. The King-Charles-the-First-time plan of legislation, peculiar to the Imperial Parliament, of first and second readings, Committee stage, report and third reading; with the solemn repetition of the same law-making mummery in the Upper Chamber; also still recommends itself to these miniature Legislative Assemblies born in our own day.

The nominative character of the Upper Chamber of New South Wales was, as already mentioned, mainly the work of

Wentworth. He was anxious to reproduce as near as possible the kind of legislature which obtained at Westminster. A House of Lords being very obnoxious to popular feeling, a Second Chamber, with nominated members, would be the nearest copy to serve as a check upon too hasty democratic legislation in the elective popular Assembly.

Why some of the seven colonies did not adopt a Single Chamber mode of legislation is a matter of some surprise, considering the overwhelming working-class element comprised in their populations, and the recollections of what a Second Chamber had meant in the struggles for religious liberty and political freedom in Great Britain and Ireland. It has been asserted somewhere that the transition from government by nominee Councils to elective self-government was only sanctioned by the Colonial Office on the condition that the Legislature should consist of two Houses. This is likely enough to be true, and it can easily be understood how a Committee of the House of Commons, examining into a colonial demand for self-governing powers, would lend itself in the Fifties to the influence of those Colonial Secretaries in favour of putting this pressure upon the distant infant states. But it is well known now in Australasia that there would be no Imperial obstacles placed in the way of any one of the colonies that might choose, by an overwhelming vote of the electorate, to substitute the unicameral system for the one fashioned after the "Mother of Parliaments." I found no movement of an active kind in that direction in any of the colonies. Practically all the Labour leaders expressed themselves in favour of a Single Chamber, but they did not push their views into political action. A preference for the Referendum seemed to prevail among the advocates of advanced reform. This Referendum, plus first, second, and third readings of bills in both Houses, should, in all conscience, be a change of such exhaustive conservatism in the obstruction of legislation as to satisfy the most reactionary Tory. In fact, Lord Salisbury is one with the Australian Labour leaders in a predilection for the reform with the fine-sounding name; a rather ominous support, surely, of a Radical (?) scheme.

The argument that, because almost all constitutionally governed nations have adopted the dual Chamber system of law-making, the Australian colonies had no choice but to follow a universal example, would have some force if Australia were a Great Britain, a France, or a United States. It is not. An Australian colony is an industrial state with no external national status. Its



law-making is exclusively confined to the domestic needs of working-class constituencies. The picture of the Western Australian and Tasmanian Legislatures making laws in two Houses, each with a "Black Rod" arrangement rapping at the doors of the Assembly, as in the House of Commons, and with as much of the other ancient Westminster absurdities as can be applied—and all this for the affairs of colonies each having less than half the population of the single city of Dublin—is surely carrying the flattery of imitation to excruciating lengths. Possibly Australian Federation, when it comes, will be followed by the adoption of a single Chamber in each state, on the common-sense lines of the Cantonal system in Switzerland, and which Manitoba and British Columbia were wise enough to follow when they obtained Home Rule. When the Squatterocracy obtain their Federal Parliament, with its senatorial honours and power, the working men of the colonies may surely be expected to insist upon the abolition of the needless Upper Chambers in the various states of the Federal Commonwealth. This, to some extent, would redress the balance of legislative influence, which Federation will be sure to swing round to the side of the vested interest classes.

The Legislature of New South Wales is the model upon which all the other Australian colonies moulded their Parliaments. Full representative government in the parent colony dates from 1856, and with the exception of an increase in the membership of both Houses, and an extension of the suffrage, occasioned by the growth of population, the constitution has remained unaltered. The Legislative Council, or Upper House, at present consists of sixty-six members, who are nominated for life by the governor, under the advice of Ministers responsible to the colony. The only legal qualifications for membership of this body are proofs of being a natural-born or naturalized subject, and an age of twenty-one or over. Members have the letters "M.L.C." (Member of the Legislative Council) placed after their names, and are entitled to write "honourable" before them. They receive no salary, but are privileged to travel free over the railways and tramways of the state, and over those of all the colonies as well—privileges also extended to members of the Assembly. The number of members in the Council is not a fixed one. Members have been added from time to time in order to retain something like a ratio between the two Houses of one half the elected for the full membership of the nominated Chamber. There being no

electoral bond between members of the Council and the people, Ministers are almost all taken from the Assembly. This system is more constitutional than that practised in the Imperial Parliament, whereby the House of Lords, though deriving no responsibility from the people, has usually obtained an unfair proportion of government posts, especially in Tory Ministries. As a rule the Upper House, where it is nominative and not elective, has one or two members of a government, but without portfolios, to answer questions and to explain the measures and methods of their colleagues.

The New South Wales Legislative Council is composed of representatives of the landowning and vested interests classes of the colony, and of lawyers and business men. A good many partisans of former Ministries have been provided from time to time with seats in this harbour of refuge after having failed to enter the Lower House through want of the necessary ballots. No attempt can be successfully made, however, to "swamp" the Council now, owing to an effort of the kind having failed some years ago, and having thereby caused a virtually unwritten law to that effect to obtain the force of an enactment. There are some distinguished men in the Council at present. Mr. Barton, who is the foremost leader of the Federation movement, is a possible first Federal Premier, being a statesman of noted ability. Mr. Lyle and Mr. Richard O'Connor, leaders of the Protectionist forces, are both able men, while there are several other politicians of colonial note among the M.L.C.'s of New South Wales.

The Legislative Assembly has 125 members, elected by as many single-member constituencies, on (since 1893) a "one-man-one-vote" franchise. The passage of this radical measure of reform occasioned what was termed at the time the temporary "dictatorship of Dibbs." Sir George Dibbs was Premier when the suffrage bill became law, but being defeated by a large majority on a proposed vote of censure, before the new constituencies could be called upon to elect the reformed Assembly, he succeeded in remaining in power, despite the vote of censure, through the complacency of the then governor. It was a piece of very smart political practice, which cost its author dearly in the subsequent general election.

Members of the Assembly receive £300 a year in remuneration for their loss of time in the service of the state. Ministers are paid much less salaries than in European or American Legislatures. The salary of the Premiers of Australia is £1000

each, while subordinate ministers are paid, as a rule (it varies in some of the colonies), about £700. The speakers of both Houses in New South Wales are in receipt of £1200 a year, with retiring pensions of £1000. All Australian Parliaments are now triennial. In New South Wales manhood suffrage prevails with a three months' residential qualification for voters, and a year's residence in an electoral district for an immigrant. All voters must obtain a document when registering, known as "an Elector's Right," without the possession of which the vote will not be recorded at an election. This plan has its dangerous as well as its patriotic feature. It obviously lends itself to the risks of the loss of the vote by the losing of the paper, and to trafficking in such documents. This, of course, is illegal; but a plan which suggests the exercise of an easy illegality is not one that will be effectively checked by the penalty of a fine. In so far as the plan compels a citizen to obtain a certificate of registration it is a step in the right direction, and would (if only accompanied by the same one-man-one-vote franchise and a three months' residential qualification) be most warmly welcomed by Parliamentary reformers at the older end of the world.

Parties in the Assembly are known as Free Trade, Protectionist, and Labour. The two former are sometimes called Liberal and Conservative, but these names no longer accurately define Parliamentary combinations in any of the colonies. Mr. Reid, the present head of the New South Wales government, is a lawyer with strong Radical tendencies. He is a Free Trader and a moderate land taxer. He is the best platform speaker in the colony, and has proved himself a capable Parliamentary leader. This is his second ministry, and as he has the support of the Labour Party, which holds the balance of power, he has nothing to fear, while that alliance lasts, from a Protectionist opposition, weak in numbers and divided in leadership.

The colony has made great progress in its recovery from the crisis of 1893, since the Reid Ministry took office, and it is claimed that the semi-Free Trade policy adopted by the government has given considerable impetus to trade and commerce—claims vehemently denied by the Protectionist opposition. Through a mistake made in the drafting of the Reid Land Tax Bill of 1895, in not providing for a new valuation, the revenue, which was expected to be augmented by the amount of the tax, has suffered to that extent. This is owing to the Supreme Court having decided, on a case submitted to it, that the omission in the Act of a necessary provision for the



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valuation of lands made subject to the tax rendered its collection, under the new measure, illegal. This error, however, has probably been remedied before now.

A New South Wales ministry consists of nine members, who are termed "the Executive Council," corresponding with "the Cabinet" of the British plan of Parliamentary government. The ministers are: Premier and Colonial Secretary, Chief Secretary, Attorney-General, Secretary for Lands, Secretary for Public Works, Minister of Education and of Labour, Minister of Justice, Postmaster-General, Secretary for Agriculture and Mines. These posts are practically the same in name and number in the case of each of the other colonies. One of the members of the Labour Party (a Single Taxer), Mr. Joseph Cook, is the present Postmaster-General in the Reid Ministry. He is, I believe, the only Labour member minister yet appointed in the colonies. The number will doubtless soon be increased.



## CHAPTER XL.

### NEW SOUTH WALES LEGISLATION

LEGISLATION in this and the sister colonies is necessarily of a domestic character, and has become in recent years markedly democratic in scope and spirit. There being no state church and no aristocracy, and the state owning the railways, there is full and fair play provided for reforms dealing with the material resources of the country and the welfare of the people, without the hampering influence of privileged castes and corporations. Herein is seen one of the blessings of a country free from both external complications and state-endowed privileged interests. All the colony's energies are devoted to the betterment of its population and the general progress of the country. The saying which attributes happiness to the country that has no history might more appropriately be applied to countries having no conquering or "civilizing" mission to rule, or ruin, other nations. It all depends upon whether the people, or only a privileged section of them, shall govern. Where there is a government by real Democracy there is no ambition for conquest, and the people have the full advantage of home programmes, policies, and legislation. Where classes and universities rule the roast, special interests, expeditions, little wars, diplomatic complications, and all the rest demand constant attention, and the issues arising out of interference with other people's rights and business become paramount in Parliament to mere questions of social reform. Australia is fortunate in the possession of many enviable advantages and laws, but in nothing more so than in the purely social and domestic character of the aims, objects, and ambitions of its public men and Legislatures.

Questions relating to the tenure and taxation of land, and to farming and pastoralist interests, to Labour in its various claims and requirements, and to the conflicting issues of Protection and Free Trade, define the main scope of past and present legislation in New South Wales. Education was a fiercely-fought

question at one time ; this was when the advocates of the present secular system fought against and defeated the upholders of the mixed denominational system. Up to 1880 a somewhat similar law to that now in operation in England was in force in New South Wales. Denominational schools were supported out of public funds, while their management and direction remained in private hands ; state schools of a secular character being under public control at the same time. The late Sir Henry Parkes passed a measure in the year mentioned which regulated primary education to the uniform plan of the state schools, thereby abolishing all public support for denominational teaching. The question has continued ever since to be a sore one, as the churches which had enjoyed the previous grants from the state funds have now to provide all the cost of schools that have become private by remaining sectarian. There is no purely secularist instruction (actively or negatively un-Christian) imparted in the public schools of New South Wales. Biblical lessons are general, while provision is made in the educational code for the special religious instruction of children, out of regular school-hours, by clergymen desiring to do so. As in most, if not in all, the other colonies the annual cost of education per child is higher than under the Board-school system of Great Britain. Teachers' salaries are higher too, and the general education given by the state is better than in England.


To deal with the entire land laws of New South Wales would require a volume in itself. They differ very little in scope and principle from those of Victoria, to which I have already briefly referred. The same general tendency of land alienation marks the land legislation of this colony, and explains why such a large proportion of its best soil has passed into a few squatters' hands. It is said, I know not with how much truth, that some seven or eight hundred people own the 50,000,000 acres that have become private property. Of the total area of the colony 198,000,000 acres, nearly three-fourths, are supposed still to remain in the hands of the state, including, of course, all the inferior lands. But, as in all the other colonies, public feeling has in late years set in strongly against any further alienation in New South Wales, and provisions have been introduced into recent laws to substitute state leases for commercial landlordism in land. In Mr. Reid's Land Tax Act of 1895 a nominal tax was imposed upon landed property above a minimum capital value of £400. This limit was fixed so as to free the general farming industry from the incidence of the tax, and to confine it



to large squatting and commercial holdings. Clauses providing for homestead selection were most useful and progressive features of the Crown Lands Act of the same year, and follow on the main lines of the legislation for a similar end alluded to in the chapter dealing with the land laws of Victoria. A homestead selector gets a perpetual lease, subject to reasonable conditions. The rent to the state is not to exceed  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the capital value of the land, for the first ten years, and is to be subject to a ten years' appraisal afterwards; tenants' improvements to be secured and tenant right amply safeguarded through a homestead-exemption clause. This is a far better system than that now in force in Ireland; better for both the tenant and the state. Unfortunately the intervening landlord is the difficulty in Ireland, and his interests, income, and inclinations have had a far higher claim upon Imperial law makers than the rights and welfare of the cultivators in all Irish land legislation.

The settlement of working men on land is also provided for by the laws of New South Wales in a manner similar to that described in the observations on the legislation of Victoria. Crown land can be appropriated for Labour Settlements under specified regulations. A Board of Management takes charge of the work of organizing such a settlement, chooses the members eligible, selects the land set apart for the purpose, plans out the work to be done, and administers the whole undertaking. The land is leased to this Board by the state for twenty-eight years, with the right of renewal. When such a Board notifies the Minister of Lands that a Labour Settlement is organized, he has power under the Act of 1893 to grant out of public moneys a sum not exceeding £25 for every member of the body who is the head of a family; £20 for every married person without a family, and £15 for each single person. This money is granted for the upbuilding of the settlement, the purchase of stock, implements, and other necessaries. It is repaid as follows: Four years after the initiation of the settlement eight per cent. of all the money advanced becomes a charge on its earnings, and this sum remains as a yearly payment afterwards until the principal and four per cent. interest thereon has been repaid.

Very little progress has so far been made in taking advantage of these liberal provisions for putting labour on land by way of Labour Settlements. The best land being in the hands of private owners it is not available for that purpose, and this



largely accounts for the fact. The land that is available may be too far west for men who may have lived most of their lives in Sydney and the towns in the east of the colony. The activity of the mining industry is also a counter attraction. While the goldfields hold out and silver continues to be found at the Barrier Range, and coal at Newcastle and other places, working men, except farmers' sons, will not hark "back to the land" in large numbers. Where, however, economic conditions favour such a movement the present land laws of the colony will offer tempting inducements to healthy, vigorous industry to settle on the soil. There has recently, however, been a very large increase of selectors' holdings under the progressive land reform of the last few years; some thousands of applications for homestead land having been made since 1895 in the districts I have taken my readers over in the south-west, and in other localities west and north, to which I will ask them to accompany me further on.

The administration of the land of New South Wales resembles that of the other colonies, or, it is perhaps more correct to say, the system established in this colony has been followed, more or less, by her younger sisters. There is a Minister of Lands, who is one of the Executive Council and responsible to the Legislature. There is a Land Appeal Court of three Commissioners, to which appeals can be made from the local Land Boards of the several districts, to which bodies, in turn, the government land agent, resident in each district, acts as a kind of executive officer, receiving applications from intending purchasers or tenants, etc., in accordance with the stipulated terms and conditions. This local Land Board hears all applications, fixes rents, terms of leases, and deals with details concerning farming and pastoralist holdings. There is some resemblance between this system and that in force in Ireland under Mr. Gladstone's Land Act of 1881, only the New South Wales method is far more popular and satisfactory. The Land Appeal Court corresponds with the Irish Land Commission. There is in both cases an appeal to the highest legal tribunal from the decisions of the chief Land Court. The District Land Board bears some relation in its functions to the courts of the Sub-Commissioners under the Irish Act; but in New South Wales there is the element of local representation present, a fact which makes all the difference between an intelligent recognition of the elective principle with local knowledge, and the Dublin Castle method of ignoring both. The state revenue from the lands of

the colony (not counting the results of the Land Tax imposed in the Act of 1895) amounts to about £700,000 a year.

New South Wales, owing possibly to the vast extent of its territory, is wanting in local government. This throws much labour upon and undesirable influence into the hands of members of the Assembly. They have to influence the government of the day in the special wants of their constituencies, the making of roads, building of bridges, sinking of artesian bores, and in many other matters which should devolve upon municipal and local bodies. There is a tempting field for "deals" between members and ministries in this condition of things, and a reform in local government is much needed. Municipal taxes are levied upon the estimated annual value of property. It is the same in four other colonies; Queensland and New Zealand fixing their local taxes on the capital value.

The system of relieving the poor has been sketched in my notes on Bendigo in Victoria. The same plan and principle, with varying details, are followed in all the other colonies. In New South Wales they have in addition adopted the admirable plan of boarding-out the children of indigent parents, so as to substitute something like home life for that of an institution. The plan, it is claimed, has worked most beneficently on the character of such children.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE RISE OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES LABOUR PARTY

**T**HE uprise of the Parliamentary Labour Party of New South Wales was a dramatic anti-climax to the defeat of Australian Trades Unionism in the disastrous maritime strike of 1890. We have nothing like a parallel to it in the history of Labour struggles in Great Britain and Ireland. The failure of a strike with us (and in late years it has almost always been a record of failure) brings the penalties of defeat to emphasize the victory of the capitalist forces. Weakened unions, dispirited men, depleted exchequers, and the growth of non-Union aggressiveness, follow almost invariably the starving-out of the Labour army in the warfare of the strike. They have a brighter story to tell at the antipodes. The workers were seemingly crushed in the battle with the shipping interests in 1890. In 1891 the same bodies that had gone down in the Sedan of the year before emerged an organized Parliamentary force, holding the balance of power in the legislature of New South Wales. The capitalist victories were thus more than neutralized inside a twelvemonth. The constitutional weapon of the ballot box was used in exchange for the war club of the striker, and the movement which had governments and laws and newspapers pitted successfully against it a few months previously became the arbiter within the Legislature of the fate of ministries and of the moulding of legislation. It was indeed a wonderful transformation, and when we compare to-day the many measures of progressive social reform passed in the Parliaments of the three older colonies since then, mainly at the instance of Labour parties, with the disastrous condition of the Labour movement in 1890, we have a great object-lesson in the striking contrast which the comparison offers for Labour leaders and movements in other parts of the English-speaking world.

The defeat of 1890 was most assuredly a big blessing in disguise for the Labour cause of Australia. It opened wide the eyes of working men to the folly of neglecting political means



for reaching better ends than the strike failed to obtain. The sweet uses of adversity tended to broaden views, and give to the Trades Unions a clearer vision of the duty of Labour towards the state. The strike had injured many innocent interests, as it always did and always will. "Could not a more enlightened remedy be found?" seemed to be one of the rational conclusions arrived at, and the Trades Unions co-operated with the victorious capitalists and their government allies, through the means of a commission, in an effort to find a way of settling trade disputes by the peaceful methods of arbitration. These efforts succeeded and left the Labour organizations free to devote their energies to the carrying out of a programme of Parliamentary action. Labour made up its mind to send men from its own ranks to the Legislature. It resolved to be represented by its own and not by another class. There were no insuperable difficulties in the way, as in Great Britain and Ireland. Members were paid. The franchise was available, though not to the extent it soon afterwards became. Constituencies were small, and the mining, shearing, and maritime Labour elements were so comparatively large in the population of the colony that it only needed steady exertions in the constituencies to secure the return of a fair number of Labour members. Issues upon which differences existed in the Labour ranks were wisely subordinated to the one task of electing direct Labour men, and free traders, protectionists, and single taxers united in securing that object. They succeeded to an extent which astounded the whole public of Australia. In fact, a peaceful revolution had been created in the Parliamentary politics of New South Wales.

The success at first seemed to be too great, and became, on that account, intoxicating and somewhat embarrassing afterwards. They won no less than eighteen seats in Sydney alone, and emerged from the general election of June, 1891, thirty-five strong, while five more members were elected who called themselves Independents; with a government having only forty-nine supporters, and an opposition numbering fifty. Here we had the very men whom the whole machinery of capital and laws had compelled to bite the dust of defeat twelve months previously seated in the Legislature, masters of the Parliamentary situation, and as the dictators of the government in the law-making Assembly of New South Wales. Or, as a capitalist organ tersely put it at the time, "Every vote polled for a Labour candidate was in effect a declaration that the way to reform laws was to remake them, not to break them. We are entitled to congratu-

late the country upon the fact that the law-breakers of last year are the law-makers of this year."

Both the Parkes free trade Ministry and the protectionist Opposition, led by Mr. Dibbs, played upon the minor dividing lines within the new party in order to break its solidarity, and these tactics soon succeeded. The Labour Party was wanting in an experienced leadership, all the members being new to Parliamentary life, while the strong protectionist leanings of a large section of the members made them an easy prey to the undermining policy of the wily Opposition. There had been no Parliamentary pledge agreed upon, like that of the Irish Party, to sit, act, and vote with the majority, and the result was an early split in the ranks upon a secondary fiscal issue raised solely for the purpose of creating dissension among the Labour members. Eight members seceded as protectionists, reducing the strength of the party to twenty-seven. This was soon followed by another cleavage due to similar tactics, but before the biggest and last disruption came the Labour party had rendered one good service to the cause of progressive democracy by terminating the ministerial career of the most unscrupulous opportunist Australian politics had yet produced, Sir Henry Parkes. The Labour men turned out the Parkes free trade government to make way for a protectionist administration under Mr. Dibbs, who had a pro-Labour programme specially baited to catch the support of the Labour members for the promotion of protectionist legislation. The ruse succeeded. Mr. Reid, now Premier, then a leading member of the Opposition, proposed a statesmanlike resolution calling for the postponement of all issues involving conflicts between the principles of free trade and protection until the country should have the opportunity of pronouncing upon the question of electoral reform, embodying the principle of "one man one vote." This resolution should have had the united support of the Labour party, but as it was moved by a leading free trader against the protectionist Dibbs Ministry the ~~section~~ of the Labour Party who were protectionists voted against it, while about an equal number went to a division in its favour. The party was thus literally split in two, to the delight of its opponents and the dismay of its friends. It was declared at once that a Parliamentary Labour Party was impossible as a permanent political force, and that the old parties would again assert their ascendancy in New South Wales. These ~~prop~~ have since been falsified. For a time, however, it was dangerously near being verified.



The party hitherto led by Sir Henry Parkes and called the Free Trade Party fell under the more progressive and more democratic—if also opportunist—lead of Mr. Reid, and both he, on the one hand, and the main section of the Labour Party on the other, saw how the free trade policy could merge into one of land reform and taxation of land values, while the extension of the suffrage on the one-man-one-vote principle provided a solid basis for united efforts in furtherance of this plan of progressive legislation. The other section of the Labour Party formed itself into a "Democratic Party," and when the next general election took place in 1893 they were practically obliterated. The Labour Party, favouring one man one vote and the taxation of land values, came back the reunited party it has since remained, with an average strength of some twenty members; enough to still keep the balance of power and to obtain progressive measures in return for the support they give to the Reid free trade and land reform ministry. In taking this line the New South Wales Labour Party wisely followed the advice which the veteran reformer Sir George Grey always gave them—to aim steadily for one man one vote and the taxation of land values. This programme saved the party, and obtained in 1893 the measure of suffrage reform which did away with dual voting and gave the working classes manhood suffrage. The result is that the Labour Party remains a powerful factor in the Legislature, and certain to continue, while united, the propelling instrument of progress in the law-making of the colony. It has accomplished valuable work for the workers of the country in passing, or helping to pass, various measures directly beneficial to the labouring masses—measures covering most of the demands of advanced Trades Unionism.

As speakers I would rank them on a level with the best of the Labour leaders of England or America. The Australian Labour member is generally a Temperance advocate, but not, as a rule, in favour of Prohibition. The *personnel* of the various Parliamentary Labour parties show little or no differentiating qualities. They might all be members of one party.

The Trades Disputes Conciliation and Arbitration Act of March, 1892, was as much due to the great strike of 1890 as to the existence of a Labour Party in the Legislature. The savage nature of the struggle and the injuries done to innocent interests by its prolongation created a national demand for a peaceful method of adjusting differences between capital and labour. The Act referred to became law as a result of this popular feeling.

It was, however, only a permissive measure, and limited in its operation to four years. This limitation was, I believe, the work of the Legislative Council. The chief benefits of the Act consisted in pointing the way to arbitration, rather than to strikes, as the best means of solving Labour disputes. New Zealand, always wisely courageous in progressive legislation, made its arbitration law both compulsory and permanent. I refer to this enactment at some length in my impressions of that colony. But in New South Wales itself the object-lesson afforded by the terms of the Act of 1892, in favour of enlightened means as against the barbarous ones of strike warfare, tended to win minds over to peaceful methods. Then the protection to Labour interests and to the cause of the workers afforded by the unique position and power occupied by the Labour leaders in Parliament, virtually put an end to the bitter antagonism which generated the desperate conflict involved in the maritime struggle of 1890. The strike at the silver mines of Broken Hill in 1894 was limited in both area and interests, and though it was a savage contest while it lasted (resulting in the imprisonment of some of the strike leaders), it entailed no such trouble or suffering as the fight of 1890. Had the Arbitration Act of 1892 been compulsory in its operations, as in New Zealand, the strike at the Barrier Ranges would have been a peaceful contest before arbitrators, instead of a struggle involving bad blood on both sides, and much injury to the industrial and trading interests of Broken Hill.

The reference made to Sir Henry Parkes, and to the influence which he wielded for so long a time in the public affairs of New South Wales, call for a reason why a stranger visiting the colony should appear to disparage his political character. My reason is possibly open to a charge of bias, but it is this: I do not know of an instance in the annals of party warfare to compare, in unprincipled opportunism, with the use which he made of the shooting of the Duke of Edinburgh by the lunatic O'Farrell, at Sydney, in 1867. The act, on the face of it, was that of a person insane. The Duke was young, was the guest, as it were, of Australia, and had done no wrong to any person or feeling that could excite revengeful animosity. His attempted assassination was therefore outside the pale of political or sane personal promptings, and could only be the result of a madman's freak. This was the view of fair and sober minds in the colonies at the time. No class or race deplored the act more than the Irish citizens, to whom O'Farrell's name linked him in racial association. But their indignation, outspoken and sincere as it



admittedly was, availed them nothing. They were assailed in the most cowardly manner by the anti-Irish and anti-Catholic press, and Parkes was the chief accusing voice in openly charging plots and conspiracies, in line with O'Farrell's act, against the Irish Catholic people of Australia. Parkes revelled in this wave of bigotry, and rode upon it in a tempest of disgraceful popularity. Irish workers were dismissed from workshops, Irish girls discharged from domestic service, and a reign of political and party terror swept the country. Parkes paid large sums of money to a noted scoundrel to supply him with "revelations" about the "Catholic conspiracy." This creature was put into the prison with O'Farrell, and shorthand writers engaged by Parkes to take down the conversations between the spy and the lunatic, which Parkes used for the purposes of his anti-Irish propaganda. On the strength of these concocted tales of plots to murder the Royal Family and others, he and a renegade Irish Catholic succeeded in passing a treason-felony bill for New South Wales, which, among other provisions, proposed to imprison anyone who should refuse to drink the Queen's health! This fanatical folly was courageously opposed by honest Englishmen and Scotchmen, members of the Legislature, who had not lost their heads in Parkes's organized scare. It was passed, however, but Lord Belmore, an Irish Protestant governor, who evidently fathomed the real character of the "conspiracy," refused his signature to the Act, and referred it to the home authorities, by whom it was promptly disallowed. O'Farrell was executed, and Parkes's special informer vanished after obtaining large sums of money for his "revelations." The whole dirty and disgraceful scheme exposed itself in due course, and tended to discredit the politician who had resorted to so base a means of furthering his own personal aims and ambition. A few years after the hanging of O'Farrell his brother attempted to shoot the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, a venerable Englishman—the very man whom Parkes's "informer" had placed at the head of "the band of Fenian conspirators" who were to "exterminate the Royal Family"! I venture to again assert that it would be no easy task to find in the history of any politician of note in any country a more discreditable record of vile means towards achieving a party purpose.



## CHAPTER XLII.


### OVER THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

NATURE has indeed been lavish in her gifts of scenery to Sydney. Turn which way you will, when leaving the city, the eye finds something pleasing in landscape views to feast upon. Going westwards across the Blue Mountains, a range of timbered hills rising from the Emu plains about thirty miles away, you pass through Parramatta, which may almost be called a suburb of the capital. It is an older settlement than Sydney, in a sense, and has some quaint buildings dating from the end of the last century. But you become so charmed with the delightful appearance and situation of the town that the buildings are lost sight of. The everlasting gum tree is associated here with pines, firs, and oaks, which embrace the town in a wealth of leafy shade that must cause the citizens to bless the original planters when the December sun rains its searching heat upon them. Orange and melon groves, vineyards, orchards, and gardens are seen on every hand as you pass through and proceed over the plains which extend away to where the Nepean river comes out at the foot of the Blue Mountains. The railway climbs up the steep side of these hills, parallel with the old road which was made by convict labour. What a task the building of that roadway must have been! There is an old woman living at Victoria, a village on the hills, who remembers the gangs of prisoners who were thus employed. She asserts that scarcely a week went by without a prisoner being shot down, or hung on the branch of some tree, for attempting to escape or for an assault upon a warder. Flogging was a punishment awarded for the most trivial offences. In fact, this splendid road over the mountains may be said to have been watered with the sweat and blood of the unfortunate wretches of the transportation days.

As the railway line rises up the side of the hills very fine views of the plains and Parramatta, and of Sydney in the

distance, are obtained. Then a sudden turn in the route and you are lost amidst the dense gum forest that clothes the mountains. You see nothing but trees and tops of trees, down deep gorges and up picturesque ravines, until Victoria on the summit is reached. The journey so far occupies some two or three hours from Sydney, and the elevation of these hills and the coolness of the atmosphere make the place a favourite residence for the city's plutocracy in the hot summer months. The bank-promoted land boom of 1893 extended its mad operations up to the very villages on these mountains. Land was sold at so much per foot, and bought for future values even in this elevated wilderness. Numbers of these "lots" were pointed out, now lying as so many sad reminders (to the last purchasers) of the desperate and costly folly of five years ago. The scenery becomes wild in the extreme along the mountain course of the railway until a descent is made down to Zigzag on the other side; a place most appropriately named indeed. The engineering work shown in the cutting of the line down the steep mountain side equals anything you see in similar elevated railways in America. Coal and iron are plentiful on the western side of the range, particularly coal, and it is in the possession of these ores where New South Wales has such great advantages over her neighbouring colonies to the west. The country from here on to Bathurst is varied in character, but not specially interesting to the eye. The land is of poor quality until you sight the Bathurst plains. Here you strike the kind of soil we were familiar with down in the Riverina country, south of where we are now. These "plains" are so named, more on account of the contrast they offer to the usual gum or scrub-covered country of Australia, than to any real claim to be so called.

Bathurst is built up from the banks of the Macquarie river, on the side of a sloping hill, which gives it an attractive-looking and healthy site, and renders its drainage an easy matter. The citizens call their town "the Capital of the West," a title stoutly denied by the equally ambitious people of Orange, the next large town still further westward. The rivalry between the two little cities does not cultivate too much journalistic charity in the columns of their various competing newspapers. Bathurst has, I believe, the largest population. If I am wrong, it is out of no wish to do injustice to Orange. It claims some 10,000 people. Some of its business houses would be a credit to Sydney. It is a handsome city on the whole, though not



comparable with Ballarat. It has one fine street and a few buildings of some architectural claim to recognition. The prison (with a visit to which I deal elsewhere) is, however, the costliest and most imposing edifice in the place, though the dome-covered court-house is a nearer approach to a classic style of architecture. Churches are many, but there are none of them specially attractive in design or finish.

The ownership of the land of the "plains" is in a few hands, and the landlord and tenant system is in order. The soil along the river grows the rich fodder grass, lucerne, in abundance, while wheat and all the cereals flourish well on the exceedingly rich land round the city. The rent for this land will average about a pound per acre. The houses of tenants and labourers, scattered here and there, have the appearance of being the homes of hard-working but by no means prosperous workers—conditions familiar to the landlord system almost everywhere.

It is claimed that the first discovery of gold in Australia was made at Bathurst, in 1851, by an Englishman named Hargreaves. Orange denies that the rival town has any real right to this historic discovery, as Lewis Ponds, where the gold was actually found by Hargreaves, is only three miles from the true western capital, while Summer Hill Creek is also much nearer there than to the presumptuous place on the plains. Bathurst simply rejoins that, as Orange was in its municipal swaddling clothes at the time, these mining camps were within the bailiwick of the metropolis of the west by the Macquarie. The government statistician for New South Wales, Mr. T. A. Cogan, says that the first find of gold in the Australias was made in 1823, by a surveyor named O'Brien, and that the place where it was unearthed was some fifteen miles from Bathurst. But the big rush which followed Hargreaves' discovery was the beginning of Bathurst's growth and wealth, and though there is very little gold mining going on now in its immediate vicinity, the city has a rich country around it, and finds in agricultural, grazing, and other industries the sources of a moderate but permanent prosperity.


The distance from Bathurst to Orange is much longer by rail than as the crow flies, owing to the line dipping southwards to reach the junction at Blayney. This lengthens the journey by train to some sixty or seventy miles over an uninteresting country, with large areas of uncleared land. A more elevated region is reached as you approach Orange. In fact, you get into another climate when nearing Bathurst's rival. The air is far more



bracing than down on the plains, and I was informed that snow is sometimes seen on the tops of a range of hills which form a striking feature in the local landscape. The town has a handsome, clean, and go-ahead appearance, but has nothing striking or original in its buildings. It has many of the features of a frontier centre, and denotes, in its busy business dealings, the kind of country around it to which it is the distributing factor. Summer Street is a wide thoroughfare, but boasts no imposing public structures. The town has the advantage of a healthy, elevated site, and claims a population about equal to that of Bathurst.

Gold mining is still largely carried on at Lucknow, six miles away, and at Summer Hill, which is also in the neighbourhood. The mines at Lucknow have been continuously worked for the past forty years, and the manager, Mr. Newman, M.L.A., told me that over twenty tons of gold had been taken from them in his time. Free gold is found in some of the reefs, but the greater portion of the stone now mined is refractory ore, requiring complicated processes. The mines at Lucknow are owned by English companies. There are other gold-mining properties in the locality, but I did not visit them.

The country around Orange and away up the north as far as Dubbo, a distance of some eighty miles on the central line, is a wool-growing region with immense squatters' estates, and large tracts of state lands. There is a strong, and I think an unreasonable, feeling against the squatters on the part of those working men who find most of their employment in shearing, boundary riding, etc. It is only the feeling we know of, nearer home, as existing among educated working men against some class of capitalists, and which will naturally exist so long as one man wants to buy, at the cheapest rate, what another wishes to sell him, at the dearest price. In the case of the squatter or pastoralist the ownership of huge blocks of land, ten, twenty-five, or fifty miles square, gives food for swear-words to the anti-monopolist, and adds, in his view, to the obnoxious labour-starving capitalist the odium of the bloated landowner. It is not easy to see the justice of some, at least, of this prejudice. The land in these squatting regions is so plentiful, and, as a rule, so poor, and people (workers) are so few, that it is good only for the purpose it is put to, wool growing. This industry gives to shearers a very large amount of employment during one portion of the year, which would not be available if the squatter or the bank (of which he is often only the agent) put their



money in stocks or some kindred investment. Possibly, if I knew the squatter better, as an employer or as a landlord, I would express other opinions. I am, however, only speaking of the industry of wool growing in connection with land for which no better use is likely to be found until more people demand more room for their wants and energies, and my views of landlords and of land monopoly are pretty well known.

On the line to Dubbo you pass by Wellington, a town with a charming situation, reposing in the middle of rich-looking land, and sheltering under the kindly protection of a range of dark green hills. It is the prettiest-looking little town you meet with on the long journey from Sydney, and most travellers get off here to visit the caves in the mountain for which Wellington is famous. It is exceptionally fortunate, as the western districts of New South Wales go, in the possession of two rivers, at the junction of which the town stands. River or rainfall is all that Australian soil requires to make it grow almost anything in food-stuffs and fruit, and the people of Wellington have well utilized the great advantage which they derive from the waters of these rivers in cultivating the rich soil around them. I had not the good fortune to remain over at this place, and can only speak of it as it appeared to my eyes during an hour's wait at the railway station. My fellow-countrymen of the town were kind enough to come and assure me of the warm sympathy that was felt by them in distant Wellington for the national struggle in "the old land" at the other end of the earth.

The world at large knows little of Dubbo, though my distinguished *compagnon de voyage*, Mark Twain, has done something in his latest delightful volume to make mankind better acquainted with it. It is related of the late Sir Henry Parkes that he once asked, in the Assembly at Sydney, "Where was Dubbo?" This was, of course, only affected ignorance. Politically it was not with the free trade leader, and that possibly explained his want of topographical information. If, however, the reading world knows but little of Dubbo, no similar disparaging remark can be made about the population you find there. One of the very best-informed men I had the good fortune to meet in my Australian tour was the editor of a local paper, and known to a wider circle of readers in the colonies as "Will Honeycomb," while Dubbo citizens generally are in every respect a very much up-to-date class of people.

Being a hundred and fifty miles west of Bathurst, Dubbo, with its six thousand of a population, claims to be the true

capital of the west, and, doubtless, Burke, several hundred miles still further west, has its views also on the worthiest aspirant to that claim ; but as my journey did not extend beyond Dubbo, I can only indulge in conjecture as to what the people on the Darling river say of their three or four more eastern rivals. Dubbo has the benefit of the waters of the Macquarie river, which runs by the town. It is not a handsome town, and must, in this respect, cede the palm to both Orange and Bathurst ; but it struck me as being an equally go-ahead place, fully alive to the needs for other than pastoralist industries, and with courage and enterprise enough to make the most of the resources lying around it. I was taken to a chilled-meat works near the place which had proved a great success, and which was acting as a stimulant to the creation of other industries arising out of the meat and wool-growing character of the surrounding country.

All the political creeds and economic theories of the day have their votaries and champions at Dubbo. Protectionists and free traders, socialists and single taxers, pastoralists and shearers, make election times a little lively up there by the Macquarie. There is not a man you meet there, from the able mayor of the town (he is almost the perpetual mayor) to the "sundowner" by the river, who will not undertake to suggest the exact kind of government and the special kind of laws which ought to guard and direct the destinies of New South Wales. A stranger dropping in on Dubbo from the old world will form a very high opinion of the intelligence of the people he will meet with in this frontier town. A hardy, well-informed, and most hospitable people, with all the good qualities of the races they spring from, will, I feel certain, make the Dubbo of the future a place to be reckoned with in enterprise and progress by its more ambitious rivals.

Returning south to Orange, I drove over the country lying still further south, on through Blayney, Cargo, and Cowra, to Young, which latter town is an old mining camp and within a few miles of Murrumburrah, where I took my readers to on the initial journey in this colony. What I have said many times already in giving my impressions of this section of New South Wales will generally describe the districts I am now referring to. The land varies in quality and in situation. Where there is water there are cleared areas, good farms, and cereal cultivation, but the bulk of the land is uncleared and devoted to pasturage.

"Selectors" (persons privileged under the New South Wales land laws to choose homestead holdings under certain conditions



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on government land) are met with in all these places, struggling hard to clear the gum trees off the soil. This is a tedious labour. It is done by what is termed "ring-barking" and firing. Many men work at "ring-barking" as a regular occupation, doing so many hundred gum trees, or an acre, according to agreement, for a given sum. A ring cutting is made with an axe round the trunk a couple of inches deep, at about three feet from the ground, and the tree forthwith begins to die. The sap dries out of it in a few months, and the gum becomes the parched-looking ghost of a forest tree. It is fired the year after, and returns its ashes in manure to the soil which gave it life.

The roads through all this country are often mere tracks, made by teamsters and boundary riders, and are deeply furrowed here and there, and must be muddy and dangerous in certain seasons. On the main routes, the old mail coach roads, you have fairly good highways, on which a bicycle could safely travel. Driving is so universal in these upland regions that a run of twenty-five or even fifty miles in a buggy or on horseback to see a friend or visit a fair is considered a trivial matter. The air is dry and exhilarating, and the gum forest gives, at least to the stranger, an enjoyment not associated with this healthful exercise in treeless regions nearer home. Add to all this a genuine, open-hearted hospitality on the part of all those you meet in bush and pastoral life, and some idea can be formed of the pleasures of travelling in such a country.



## CHAPTER XLIII.

### A SQUATTER'S HOME AND OPINIONS

SQUATTERS may be more or less obnoxious in relation to land owning, but for a night's lodging and entertainment to a wayfarer in the bush they are hospitable and kindly to a fault. It was my good luck, while travelling through the districts we are now in, to spend a night in the house of a large pastoralist whose flocks grazed over some 40,000 acres of land. He had had his trouble with the Shearers' Union in his time, was virtually besieged by strikers in his home, had an all-round "lively" time, and fought his corner with pluck while the struggle lasted. But my well-known leanings towards land nationalization and trades unions did not in the least lessen the heartiness of my host's welcome. The house was very comfortably but not luxuriantly furnished. There was good taste shown in all its appointments, while a vulgar display of wealth there was none. My host had all the intelligence, energy, and character that combine to build up the fortunes of the self-made man. He had led an exciting career. Born in the colony, of Ulster parentage, he became a mail-car driver. He was more than once "held up" by "bushrangers" in the pre-railway days. He is, I believe, the driver who figures in Rolf Boldrewood's story, *Robbery Under Arms*, the main scenes of which are laid in this section of the country. Driving a gold escort on one occasion they were attacked by the "Gardener Gang" of bushrangers, who operated between Young and Bathurst, when a sergeant sitting beside the driver was shot dead along with another policeman, and the gold captured. It was afterwards recovered. The Gardener Gang were taken and broken up, two of them being hanged in Sydney and four sent to prison for life. Two of these four were released in after years, and are now living as "selectors" in the very district which they had terrorized as bush brigands in earlier life. When the extension of the railway put an end to both mail-cars and bushrangers my host retired



too, went into business, prospered, and became a well-to-do squatter.

He is an ardent protectionist and a keen politician, and I have taken the liberty of introducing him into these sketches so as to present to my readers, through him, the views of men of his class upon the laws and policies of parties in New South Wales. He strongly condemned Mr. Reid's land tax bill, which, he declared, was to be a tax on squatters for the support of a government run by a paid Labour Party. Why should the holders of land valued at £400 be exempt? Why were the members' salaries of £300 a year not taxed? These incomes "of unearned political increment" should be taxed as well as all incomes. The Shearers' Union was too strong in so small a community, and wielded a power which practically defied the law. This was unconstitutional. It was an opportunist and unprincipled ministry, held in power by this and similar bodies, which placed this unfair tax upon the pastoralist industry. Legislation of that kind by ministries of such a kidney would soon send the country to the dogs. The days of New South Wales's prosperity were being numbered by the proceedings of this free trade-cum-socialist government. No more money would be borrowed for developing the resources of the colony, and Victoria, which had wisely stuck to protection, would forge ahead of New South Wales. My host appeared to forget that the then Victorian ministry was also held in office by a Labour Party, but that was a mere detail.

Henry George, continued my friend, had brought a great deal of this trouble on the colonies by his lectures. His single tax theories had appealed to the cupidity of the working classes, and had inspired Mr. Reid's proposal to tax land. Mr. George had visited the nearest town to my host's home. "I floored him with a single question," he remarked, and he evidently enjoyed the telling of the incident to his interested auditor. "I put him this query after he had rehearsed his 'Progress and Poverty' sophisms to a gullible audience, and I will allow you to judge of the way in which he evaded its force"—"Suppose," I asked him, "a man borrows ten thousand pounds, and puts it into land as an investment, why should the man who loans that sum and makes annual interest upon it be exempt from all the taxation which falls upon the borrower? One gives useful employment and the other doesn't. Why tax the giver of work and not 'the privileged idler'?" "George's reply," my host declared, "was unworthy of a man of his ability, and showed he was beaten.

His answer was, 'We will get at the other fellow by some other means afterwards.'" Not caring to argue with an opponent who claimed to have "floored" Henry George, I allowed my squatter friend's conclusions to remain unassailed.

He is a fair type of the class of men who practically own all the best land of the colony. Like most Australian property owners they are conservative and reactionary, and fight against the spirit of progress in politics, believing that it means in the end the taking away in some form or other of some of the power or wealth which was so cheaply and easily obtained in the early days of settlement. They will make a big fight against the land-reforming ideas of the Liberal and Labour parties; and as the Legislative Council of New South Wales is like the House of Lords, a vested interest body and free from the obligation of election, the squatters have its backing in the Legislature, and are not in much danger, I think, while the population remains at the rate of three or four persons only to the square mile in a country having an area of close upon two hundred million acres.

Cowra is another agricultural town with some mining industries near by on the line running south from Blayney to Murrumburrah, where it joins the main line from Albury to Sydney. It has excellent farming land and a population of some two thousand, with nothing calling for particular comment in its buildings or municipal life.

Young, fifty miles further south, was one of the famous gold camps of Australia in the Fifties. A discovery of alluvial gold on the site of the present town brought a great rush of miners from all quarters, as many as twenty-five thousand being encamped in the place and vicinity at one time. The Chinese, who had also been attracted to the place, were driven out of the camp by the white diggers under pain of death if they returned. The "Gardener Gang" of bushrangers, referred to a few pages back, committed gold robberies round Young in these exciting days. The reminiscences of these events, as told me by old miners during a very pleasant if brief stay, made one wish to remain long enough in so memorable a spot to gather up its many stories of stirring adventure, some of which, I believe, prompted that most successful novel, *Robbery Under Arms*. Young is still a gold-mining centre, but there are no more than four or five hundred men now employed seeking the yellow metal. The digging is still all alluvial, and a large extent of the country from Young, south



to Murrumburrah, is rooted over by fossickers and others. You see these men, with their spades and buckets, patiently searching the heaps of gravel that must have been gone over years before, looking for the particles of gold that may have escaped less vigilant eyes. These men camp out near their work and come into Young when they want to exchange their grains of "the dust" for money or food.

Young, with its surroundings, has a population of six or eight thousand, and is a very flourishing town. One industry in a new country always begets another, and out of the gold digging farming always springs where the soil is suitable. Miners want food, and the land around Young produces it in abundance. It is accounted among the best grain-growing centres in the colony. The farmers of the district have built a co-operative flour mill in which to grind their own grain, and they thus give to their town the benefit of the industry. Butter factories and creameries have also been started in recent years, and are doing well. I was pleased to learn that the best and largest farms from Young to Murrumburrah were held by my fellow-countrymen, who form the strongest nationality in the district; the Scotch and English coming next, with some Germans, and many of the irrepressible Chinese.

John Chinaman evidently liked Young, as he came back after having been driven out in the gold fever days. Here, as elsewhere in these inland towns, John is a sober and a most industrious member of the community. He is ostracised, socially and politically, by the community which has to admire his frugal and labour-loving habits, and when driven by this ban into games or pastimes peculiar to his race, he is pounced down upon by a vigilant and virtuous law. He is made to pay for doing what is only too common a practice, in more demoralizing forms, on the part of the law-makers who play cards, back horses, and gamble in other ways. John has worse habits than gambling, it is true, but that does not justify a too rigorous application of a law against those of his games that are harmless, except on the principle of

"Compounding for sins we are inclined to,  
By damning those we have no mind to."

Young was almost guilty at one time of spoiling the future ministerial career of a statesman marked out by a special genius for the Postmaster-Generalship of the Earth, as soon as

ever we enjoy the "Federation of the world and the Parliament of man." Mr. Henniker Heaton, M.P., once contested Young. What was the loss of Young was the gain of Canterbury, if not of successive English Postmasters-General.



## CHAPTER XLIV.

### FROM SYDNEY TO THE BORDER OF QUEENSLAND

**L**EAVING Sydney for a trip through the Hunter river country, and thence north to the Queensland border, you soon reach the Hawkesbury river after starting by rail from the capital. This lovely stream is in river scenery what Sydney Harbour is as an estuary, surpassingly beautiful. It resembles a series of serpentine little lakes, all with timbered shores and miniature headlands; twisting and turning every half-mile for a course of fifty, into endless charming vistas of winding wood and water. The Hawkesbury is a place to once visit, and dream of for ever afterwards. The government, to its æsthetic credit be it recorded, runs an excursion steamer up this fifty miles of lovely views, and allows passengers to return to Sydney by rail on the same ticket.

Newcastle, the second most populous city in New South Wales, stands in a most striking situation at the mouth of the Hunter, about eighty miles north of Sydney. It is reached by both sea and rail. It is called after its famous namesake on the Tyne, and is the greatest coal-producing centre in Australasia. Three small towns in the vicinity also borrow their names from Northumberland: Morpeth, Wallsend, and Alswick. I found the leader of the miners in the antipodean Newcastle to be from the older place, and he informed me that a large number of Tyneside people were among the sixty thousand of a population in and around Newcastle.

This Hunter river district was one of the worst of the convict settlements in the transportation days, and the stories that are told of the floggings and hangings of prisoners up here would lead to the conclusion that the chief ruffians were picked out of the worst types of transported criminals, and made into officers and warders on account of such qualifications. Trees on the way up the valley of the Hunter were pointed out to me as having been



the favourite flogging posts for the convict gangs. I was told that the grass does not grow round these trees. Gallons of blood must have fallen from the backs of wretches who broke the rules or offended the uninformed scoundrels who made these regulations.

It was in a hunt after some prisoners who had tried to escape from one of these gangs that coal was first found at Newcastle. The city has progressed by leaps and bounds as a consequence of its chief product. Ships are seen in the harbour from all parts of the world. Coal is taken from here to India on the one hand, and to San Francisco on the other. Until recently a big land syndicate had a monopoly of the coal in the Hunter region, but some more mines were opened up on other properties and the monopoly was broken. There had been a prolonged fight between miners and employers a short time before my visit, and the place had not fully recovered from the effects of the struggle. The permissive nature of the Arbitration Act of 1892 was again at fault. The eight hours principle obtains in the district. Wages are not, however, on a par with the usual high pay for skilled labour in the colonies. Where there is but a single industry, and workers continue to multiply here as in many of the colliery districts in Great Britain, the economic trouble arising from more hands than the work requires will be sure to crop up. Capital takes advantage of this state of things, and wants its labour done at the lowest rates. And, as a rule, it is found that the needs of life are stronger than the bonds of trades unionism. Men must work when idleness means the women and children are threatened with hunger.

The best view of the picturesque town and harbour is from the little public park on the Monument Hill, on the highest point of the city. There is nothing remarkable in the matter of streets or public buildings in Newcastle. It has a cooped-up site not favourable for municipal display, though admirably adapted for drainage purposes. Built in terrace-fashion, up against the steep side of Monument Hill, the streets are not an easy matter to climb, except where they run parallel with the wharves. Hunter street is the largest and the main business thoroughfare of a city full of the life and animation of a big place squeezed into so small a compass. Nobby's Head, a striking-looking high headland running out into the bay with a lighthouse perched on the top, is the most conspicuous feature in the surrounding landscape; and the combined views of this and the city below you, of the islands beyond the harbour, having also their shafts and coal mines, and of the forest



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of masts in the bay, as seen from the top of Monument Hill, all leave a vivid and lasting impression on the memory of one's vision.

Thirty miles above Newcastle, up the rich valley of the Hunter, you come to Maitland, a flourishing town in the centre of a farming and manufacturing district, with 20,000 of a population. The soil is exceedingly rich along the river; growing, I was told, as much as four crops of lucerne a year. Where the land is rented as much as three pounds per acre is charged by the owners. A large number of farmers, however, own their own holdings, and are not of any use to the landlords. The river has a trick of cleaning Maitland occasionally by washing portions of it away when it overflows its banks. But as water is a scarce and valuable commodity in New South Wales, the casual inundations here excite only a feeling of envy in less favoured parts of the colony. The whole district in and around West and East Maitland looks exceedingly wealthy. The soil will grow everything, and in the greatest abundance. There are large estates in the vicinity in the hands of landowners, and the people demand the breaking up of them into farms. The limit of the produce of such soil as exists round here would be only the measure of the labour put upon it, and it is natural that industry should claim to have a better right to the occupation and use of such valuable land than mere rent extractors.

High Street, West Maitland's main avenue, is a wide but not an attractive-looking street. The hotels and leading business houses are in this thoroughfare. There are some good-looking public buildings in the city, and some handsome churches. It is well provided with schools, and can boast of a fine hospital. In a word, it is a rich, comfortable-looking, take-the-world-easy kind of place, having the very best possession that any town, large or small, can boast of—an industrious and typically hospitable population.

Travelling northwards from here you pass Singleton, Musswellbrook, and other pleasant-looking little towns, all seemingly favoured with excellent land, judging from the fat farms, vineyards, orchards, and lucerne fields that attract your attention on the way. Huge and valuable estates are also passed, some owned by absentee landlords, and others worked as pastoralist ranches. Vast horse-breeding farms are likewise seen on the route up to the higher region towards Tamworth, which was my next stoppage, a hundred miles from Maitland. After leaving the rich Hunter valley the country becomes more wooded, and I was glad to find

my everlasting friend, the grey gum of the many varieties—stringy bark, iron bark, and all the rest—allowing other trees like the cedar, pine, and box to appear in the woods and forests, and brighten things up with a leafy variety most welcome to the eye.

Tamworth is a sleepy but snug little town on the Peel river, on the other side of the mountains named the Liverpool Range. It can boast, among other institutions, of a successful brewery and a new prison. Its population is about the most mixed of any town out of Sydney, having English, Irish, Scotch, Germans, Swedes, French, Swiss, and Chinese, in relative proportions as named. Almost the whole of the rich Peel valley is owned by the Peel River Land and Mineral Company, a pro-English syndicate, and the progress of the town and district is very much hindered by this monopoly. Fifty miles by thirteen of a most fertile country like this, near an important town, is in the hands of a company which gives employment during the year to only about ten men, except in shearing time. If this monopoly were broken up, or taxed into a selling disposition, as it ought to be, Tamworth would soon become a more populous and wealthy town. It has a few industries in addition to a thriving brewery, and can claim, as a municipality, to have been the first town in the colony to light its streets with electricity, and to have carried out the work as a municipal undertaking. It has a handsome public library, a very fine Catholic church and convent, with other churches not so attractive-looking, and one or two good hotels. The main streets are lined with trees, and impart a pretty look to the town. Tamworth has figured prominently in New South Wales politics at times, and has had its suffrages sought for by prominent public men. It has a very high opinion of itself in every respect, and a correspondingly low estimate of Armidale, which contests with it the claim to be the capital of the northern district of New South Wales.

The route from Tamworth to Armidale crosses the Moonbi range of mountains, and passes through scenery of the wildest and most varied kind, with hills piled upon hills, gorges, ravines, giant gums, and all the changing views of a sub-Alpine region. Tamworth's rival is found on a plateau over two thousand feet above the former place, and possessing a climate of its own. There are gold mines at Hillgrove, Urralla, and other places near Armidale. I saw some fine specimens of stone showing free gold that had just been found near an old alluvial mine at Hillgrove. The mines in the vicinity and the thriving farming industry



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round about have built up a prosperous little city which, though lacking Tamworth's more peaceful and pleasant site by the banks of the Peel river, has more striking natural features in high mountain ranges, waterfalls, and cataracts of some reputation.

The little city on the plateau is the seat of both a Protestant and Catholic bishopric, and has two handsome churches, with schools, convents, and other public institutions. One of the best hotels in the whole colony, the Imperial Hotel, adds considerably to the comfort and pleasure a traveller derives from a stay in this elevated region; and as this is the last town in New South Wales calling for notice in these touring sketches, I can only wish any visitor who may follow my footsteps a longer stay than I could make in that most admirable of hostelries. From Armidale north to the border of Queensland is a distance of some one hundred and thirty miles. The journey having been made in the night time gave no chance for observing the country on the way, and I can give no impressions of its character here.

It would be no easy task to attempt anything like an exhaustive summary of the progress and produce of the great colony we have now to some extent gone over. Volumes of official statistics with hundreds of pages are needed for such a task. I can only deal with impressions and information gathered within the limit of my journeying, and add thereto a few facts from government publications, so as to convey something like an ordered and epitomised conception to my readers of the dominant features of the country. The climate, though very warm in summer, is very healthy, being dry and free from the oppressiveness of a sultry atmosphere. The winter corresponds generally with a fine October month with us, except on the ranges, where snow falls occasionally. The death-rate of the whole colony averages about 16 to the 1000. The rainfall is small and intermittent, especially on the western plains, where occasional droughts occur with disastrous effects upon the vast flocks of sheep which roam over these almost limitless pastures. There is a steady application of progressive ideas observable in the laws and government of the colony. The state owns the railways of the country and the street tramways of Sydney. They are operated to the general satisfaction of the public, and return about three per cent. on the cost of construction and working. The state has also undertaken the work of sinking artesian bores in the west, producing thereby upwards of 20,000,000 gallons of water per day. A charge is



made for this supply to pastoralists. Whatever is lost on the working of these bores is more than made up for by the great amount of labour which wool and meat growing provides for the colony. The production of wool reaches between two hundred and fifty and three hundred million pounds weight a year.

Meat exportation in tins and in frozen chambers is rapidly growing, as is also the shipping of butter, fruits, and wines. Some of the finest dairying land in the world is found along the east coast, where the rivers and the richer grasses are. Sugar cane is likewise cultivated, but I did not visit the Clarence river district, and can only mention the industry as one typical of the resourcefulness of the country. Add to all this wealth and progress the many agricultural districts I have referred to and the more numerous ones I was unable to visit—the coal mining of Newcastle and district, the great silver mines of Broken Hill, and the colony's gold mines (which produced 360,000 ounces in 1895)—and those of my readers who have not been in New South Wales will be able to form some idea of its immense natural riches and resources. Its population is only about 1,270,000 (say that of Glasgow, Manchester, and Bradford), while its area equals that of Great Britain and France combined. The debt of the colony averages about £49 per head of population. As against this there are such assets as the railways and other state possessions, including a still (it is said) unalienated national estate of over 100,000,000 acres of land.

The main industries are the pastoral, agricultural, and mining industries, but all the other ordinary trades (except the cotton trade) found in England, are more or less carried on in this the oldest and most populous of the Australias.

There are about 2500 state schools scattered over the colony, with an enrolment of near 200,000 children—one-sixth of the whole population. The Sydney University has an annual income of £33,000 from government grants and other sources, while over £20,000 is voted in addition every year for the promotion of technical instruction in the various schools throughout the country which have been established for purposes of technical and secondary education.

In this and the neighbouring colony of Queensland the question of Asiatic labour is one of much concern to the working classes of the European races. This is apart from the special problem of Kanaka labour, which is a vexed topic of party contention in the country over the border. I deal with the Kanaka



trouble in separate chapters in my impressions of Queensland. Both colonies have comparatively large numbers of Chinese, Japs, Hindoos, and other Asiatics among their labouring populations, and despite a heavy capitation tax levied in New South Wales upon emigrants from the celestial empire. The Labour parties in both colonies have striven for years to put an absolute bar to this incursion of dirt-cheap labour from rice-fed populations, but capital and its various vested interest influences have so far prevented such drastic proposals from becoming law. North Queensland is easily reached by sea from all the eastern countries, and there being little, if any, impediment placed in the way of any of their peoples landing at the ports on York Peninsula, these Asiatic work-seekers find their way down into the more southern colonies after exploiting some of the goldfields in North Queensland.

In the case of emigrants from Hindustan there is the difficulty of barring out British subjects; a difficulty from the Imperial point of view. There is likewise the diplomatic trouble over the attempts to exclude subjects of the Chinese and Japanese governments; for it stands to reason that if people from these countries are not permitted to land and work in British dominions, the same law of exclusion should obtain against British intercourse with Japan and China. These are obstacles not easily brushed on one side by Labour leaders; but the grievance remains all the same, and is rapidly becoming a strong party issue in both colonies.

Since Mr. Chamberlain's advent to the Colonial Office rumours have gone abroad that he meditated the organization of a Crown colony in the northern regions of Australia. Powers are reserved in the Imperial Acts creating the colonies of Queensland, South Australia, and West Australia to form other colonies out of portions of these territories, should a need for such arise. The Northern Territory of South Australia has been frequently mentioned as a likely basis for such a Crown colony, and individuals and corporations owning land and mines in these regions, and wishing to sell them in London, are strongly in favour of such a plan. It is argued by them and others interested that an outlet would thus be provided for the unpopular Asiatic workers; that sugar could be grown and mines worked up there without "the mischievous meddling of Trades Unions." Such a plan, however, if attempted by the Colonial Office would arouse a widespread movement of hostility in all the Australian colonies. The formation of such an Asiatic settlement would be resisted as

an Imperial invasion of the domestic concerns of Australia. The Cheap Labour Crown colony would act as a recruiting ground for exploiters of such labour in the other colonies, and barriers of two thousand miles in extent across the island-continent could not keep the intruding Asiatics out of the countries inhabited by the European races



PART VI.  
QUEENSLAND

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CHAPTER XLV.

VOYAGE FROM SYDNEY TO BRISBANE

HAVING briefly sketched the overland journey from Sydney to the borders of Queensland in the last chapter, I will take my readers by sea to the north-eastern colony. The distance is some five hundred miles, and the ships carrying passengers and freight are excellent in every way. The A.U.S.N. Company's steamers make the trip to Brisbane in about forty hours, and provide every comfort the traveller can, in reason, desire. The coast-line is always more or less visible on the way. Vessels in fine weather ply near enough to the shore to enable land to be frequently seen, and the general character of the country is observable with the aid of glasses. The landscape, after passing Newcastle, is rough and uninviting, but not displeasing to the eye. Headlands and bluffs are numerous, with lighthouses perched on these points, denoting a coast well guarded for mariners.

Between Trial Bay and Cape Byron the look of the land along the sea is often most pleasing, having hills covered with trees in the background and a fruitful-looking country sloping down to the shore, with here and there the smoke of a village or of a timber-clearing camp imparting the needed human element to make the picture suggestive of some life and industry. We part with the coast of New South Wales after sighting a fine-looking hill, which the sailors will tell you was christened by Captain Cook and named "Mount Warning," indicating an approach to more dangerous waters, and we sail in line from thence with the

south-eastern shores of Queensland. The ship begins to give the land a wider berth at this part of the voyage, but we are still enabled to view the mainland and to admire some hilly companions of Mount Warning, which tower in the hinterland above numberless smaller elevations, all timber covered to their tops with gum and pine trees. As we near the two large islands which shelter Moreton Bay from the Pacific the land begins to wear a sandy and uninteresting look. This kind of coast continues until Cape Moreton is rounded, and our vessel turns southward inside the wide bay which once gave its name to all the country now called Queensland. Moreton Bay is almost landlocked, and is about twenty miles wide and as many in length. Its navigation, however, is not without difficulties. Large ships have to round the cape at the north of the bay, but small vessels can, I believe, enter between Stradbroke and Moreton Islands, where there is a narrow and dangerous passage.

Our ship steamed round in a circle for three hours after we entered the bay waiting for high water to take us up the Brisbane river to the capital. Inside the bay there is the island of St. Helena, Queensland's chief convict depôt, about a visit to which I have something to say in my impressions of Australasian prisons. We have still a distance of some twenty miles to go before reaching Brisbane. The channel of the river of that name is shallow, and has had to be dredged at a big cost to make it passable for ships such as those which do the coasting trade between Sydney and the maritime towns of Queensland. At high tide vessels of five thousand tons navigate the river. The voyage up is unlike anything you have yet experienced in the other colonies. Everything you see reminds you of a tropical climate. The low shores are swamp-like in appearance; mangrove trees growing as it were up out of the water; but where the land rises in elevation, as you ascend the river, some very pretty landscape visions succeed each other, as the point of view is changed again and again by the sinuous course of the stream. The river is about as broad all the way up as the Thames at Westminster Bridge, and is lined with timber or scrub most of the distance, and fringed with ornamental grounds and their villa residences as you near the city.

Brisbane captures the eye at the first view. You see it on a high bluff overlooking the river as you round a bend half a mile or so below the landing-place, and it makes a decidedly favourable impression. This first impression is not forfeited by a closer acquaintance. The situation is—or ought to be—as conducive to

health and sanitation as the site challenges your admiration for its combined charm of hill and hollow, wood and water. But Brisbane is by no means the cleanest or best-drained city in Australia, nor can it claim the palm for excellence of municipal management. It could be made, and probably will become some day, a very beautiful city, with its superb natural advantages. It was badly planned in the first instance, and suffers, like Sydney, from the want of taste and of elementary urban ideas of its early city fathers. The leading thoroughfares are narrow, and the general scheme of the city was evidently the growth of notions which never contemplated the rise of a populous capital of a colony where Captain Logan first erected his public treadmill and convict sheds for the unhappy wretches committed to his care.

In the matter of public buildings Brisbane can hold its head pretty high. The Parliament House of Queensland, next to that of Victoria, is the handsomest and most imposing in all Australasia, which is saying a good deal for a colony with a population under half a million. Government offices are also found on a similar scale of cost and architectural looks, while in churches and other public edifices, in the style and finish of its banks, its School of Arts and Technical College, General Post Office, and municipal buildings, Brisbane's 100,000 people have a most creditable exhibition of metropolitan structures. The city is so delightfully located that it can be seen almost in its entirety from many points within its boundary. From any vantage ground commanding the capital the view is one that will leave a lasting impression upon the recollection of those who are privileged to enjoy the wondrous scene of combined urban and natural beauty that unfolds itself to the eye.

In hospitals and other public institutions necessary to all large cities Brisbane is well supplied. Its Botanic Gardens, overlooking the river from near where the legislative buildings command a like prospect, are very much admired by all visitors. There is a charming public garden, or small park, not far removed from the centre of the city, and overlooking the river, which is a gem in its way, and would be an envied ornament to the best-planned city in Europe. It is beautifully planted with all the choicest trees, shrubs, and flowers of this prolific climate, and its great attractiveness invites the citizens to its agreeable shades and riparian vistas for *al fresco* repasts. Here, under a spreading palm tree, I spent a delightful afternoon during my stay in Brisbane with Dr. Kevin Izod O'Doherty



and his cultured, poetic wife "Eva," of the (Forty-eight) *Nation*. Brisbane was scarcely in existence at the time Dr. O'Doherty was sentenced to transportation for his connection with the Young Ireland movement. Its population in 1848 could not be more than three or four thousand. Now it is upwards of 100,000, and the "felon" of the last political generation is the Government Medical Inspector of the wealthy and handsome city which has grown up within the period of his restoration to liberty.

Brisbane is justly proud of its beautiful women; in fact, Queensland is noted among her sister colonies for its handsome womankind. They are not a monopoly of the capital. You admire their fine figures, tasteful dress, and winsome looks everywhere, from Townsville to Warwick, and you feel convinced that whatever fault the tropical climate of Queensland may possess it certainly does not show itself in the appearance of the women who are bred and born under its influence. The people whom you see in the streets of Brisbane bear no evidence in build or proportions of debilitating climatic conditions. The men you meet are as strong in limb, and the boys are as lively, as you find them either in Tasmania or New Zealand, where the snows cover the mountains in the winter and the cool breezes blow in the summer season. Even in the region of Rockhampton (as I point out elsewhere), actually under the Tropic of Capricorn, the heat appears to have no injurious effect upon European constitutions; at least that is the conclusion I had to arrive at as a result of close observation and inquiry during my journey in the central districts.

The thoroughfares of Brisbane, like those of Sydney, are very crowded in the evenings, and you get the impression thereby of a lively, well-dressed, go-ahead city, up to date in most things, and lacking little of the conveniences of the advanced age in which we live. The traffic in the daytime is not indicative of a large commercial activity. Brisbane is not a manufacturing centre, and there are other outlets at Maryborough, Rockhampton, Mackay, and Townsville for the chief products of the colony. Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide have each a monopoly of the export and import trade of their respective countries, and this accounts for the larger size, the greater manufacturing progress, the wealthier position and more busy appearance of these cities than the capitals of Queensland and of other colonies similarly favoured with a variety of shipping ports.

Brisbane, like the cities just mentioned, has its poorer quarters

as well as its rich and showy ones. The districts in which the labouring classes reside are not places to boast about. As in older lands, the working-class quarters are pushed as much out of the pleasant or favourite parts of the city as possible. Poverty cannot, of course, compete with wealth for such locations; but a municipality rightly minded as to its duties, both as regards the general health of the people under its care and its responsibility towards the labouring element in the community, might easily mitigate the hardships of these poorer portions of Brisbane by a better system of sanitation and a more careful supervision of the building of dwellings and planning of new streets. One would like to find, not only better drainage in these districts, but see them also planted with shade-giving trees that would afford more shelter to the children of the poor during the summer heats than can at present obtain in the bare and repellent-looking locality which was shown to me as the centre of the wage-earning section of the city.

## CHAPTER XLVI

### THE QUEENSLAND LEGISLATURE

I DID not see the Queensland Legislature in session. My stay in Brisbane was quite long enough for such an experience, but, as the colonial Parliaments differ little, if any, in modes of procedure or political complexion—all having practically the same constitution, labours, and aims—you obtain a fairly accurate conception of them all from a study of a few. Then there was another, more personal, reason why I denied myself the pleasure of seeing the Assembly or Council at work in Brisbane. There is a vastly exaggerated opinion in all the colonies of the importance of membership of the Imperial Parliament. A Smith, Jones, or Robinson from the House of Commons is looked upon (and tries in turn to look the part) as being a legislative Somebody, equal to the Lord knows how many minor law-makers at the antipodes. He is credited with influence enough to move cabinets, shape Imperial destinies, and bring colonial issues and interests into profitable relationship with the world of power and wealth that is centred in London. But, apart from this fictitious importance, he is treated with the most marked attentions—a courtesy overwhelming in contrast with the narrow and shabby treatment which a colonial M.P. experiences when he, in turn, becomes a visitor to the Legislature at Westminster. I recollect during the late "Jubilee" celebrations having to proceed to the Strangers' Lobby of the House of Commons one evening to get permission for a Premier of one of the largest colonies to pass the policeman at the door and to take a seat in the distinguished Strangers' Gallery, after he had been driven down to the House in—the Queen's carriage! Perhaps no stronger comment upon or condemnation of this supercilious spirit and want of elementary hospitality in the customs of the House of Commons towards those who are such convenient topics for post-prandial English eloquence on account of "loyalty to the Empire" could be

made than in recording this little incident. They interpret the laws of courtesy with less jealousy and much more generosity in the Australias. A visit to a colonial Parliament will mean the acceptance of an invitation from the Speaker to see him in his room, or from the Premier to be shown over the Chamber, and sometimes to occupy a seat on the floor of the House, near the Speaker, should such an honour be agreeable. Any attention of this kind towards a colonial M.P. at Westminster would probably strain to breaking point the cast-iron customs of antiquated times, which form so solemn a farce in the present-day official etiquette of the British House of Commons.

Queensland is a comparatively newly-born, self-governing country. A Home Rule constitution was given to it by the Imperial Parliament in 1859, and it ceased from that date to be known as Moreton Bay and as part of the parent colony. The population at the time was under 30,000. It is now close upon half a million. The progress of the colony has been even more pronounced in its produce than in its people. It has the second highest place in the record of Australian gold mining; having yielded from its mines about 12,000,000 ounces of the precious metal up to the present. I give further on my impressions of visits to its leading goldfields, and offer some comments upon its other chief products, wool, meat, and sugar, and only refer to them here to indicate the character of the legislation which has mainly occupied the labours of the Brisbane Parliament since it came into being.

The Legislature has two chambers, like the other Australian colonies, and follows New South Wales and New Zealand in adhering to a nominative Upper House. The limit in membership is not fixed in this or in the sister colonies. It approximates to half that of the Assembly, or Lower House. There are thirty-eight or forty members in the present Legislative Council of Queensland. There are practically no qualifications, and any naturalised Queenslander over twenty-one years old can sit in the Council if nominated thereto by the governor on the advice of the ministry in power. The membership is for life, but any "M.L.C." can resign when he pleases and seek the more popular letters, "M.L.A.," at the hands of the electors. Upper House members obtain no salaries, but they are privileged, like those of the other House, to travel free over all the Australasian railway lines.

The membership of the Legislative Council is, in practice, confined to what may be called the moneyed interests of the



colony. It is the stronghold of the squatter, the sugar planter, and other wealthy employers or property owners. In fact, it is reputed to be the most exclusively capitalistic Chamber of the Australasian Parliaments; forming, together with the strong conservatism of the Lower House, the most militant anti-socialistic Legislature of the seven. This, at any rate, is the Queensland Labour estimate of their colony's Parliament, and it explains why party feeling is more pronounced and contending issues more marked there than in any of the other Australian Legislatures.

The Legislative Assembly consists of seventy-two members. The number grows with population as new constituencies are created. The qualification is not specified, and any voter can stand as a candidate. Each member receives an allowance of £150 for his expenses and free railway travel. The franchise may be called manhood suffrage, qualified by six months' residence. There is, however, a power of multiple voting of the most conservative kind secured to property holders, leaseholders, or others possessing a £10 annual value or rental; which power enables them to vote in every constituency in which such value may be situated. It will be seen that, in the marked vested-interest character of the Upper Chamber and the strong suffrage safeguards given to all holders of property, there is ample material out of which to construct strong combative programmes for the two Parliamentary forces which now politically divide Queensland's Legislature and people—the Capitalist and Labour parties. Like all the Australasian Parliaments that of Queensland is triennial.

The present Opposition in Queensland is the Labour Party. What was the Opposition in pre-Labour times has all but vanished. It was, I believe, a nominal Liberal Party, with no special mission or aspiration beyond that of getting into office by the votes of the working classes. It has practically ceased to exist since the Labour Party succeeded in capturing some twenty constituencies by its more distinct issues and policy.

The rise of the Queensland Parliamentary Labour Party resembles in its history that of the kindred parties referred to in my impressions of some of the other colonies. The signal failure of the strike as a weapon of combat in 1890, in the maritime struggle, and again in the shearers' fight with the pastoralists, called for new methods of reform for Labour rights, and the political remedy of direct Parliamentary repre-



sentation was wisely chosen. Previous to these events, however, Mr. Thomas Glassy, the present chairman of the party (a north of Ireland Protestant and a former Trades Unionist pupil of Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P.), was returned, in 1888, as a supporter of Mr. Griffith, who was then a professed progressive leader and an anti-Kanaka man. Mr. Griffith, however, turned round on this latter question, and being in power, put down with no gentle hand the strike of the shearers in the far west of the colony. In the elections of 1893 the Labour Party polled thirty-seven thousand votes, returning fifteen members, with two more at subsequent by-elections. In the general election which has been held since then they have secured a total of nineteen or twenty seats, and are now the regular Opposition within the Assembly.

I had the pleasure of meeting all the then (seventeen) Labour members while I was in Queensland. They were kind enough to invite me to a friendly exchange of opinions during my stay in Brisbane, and I had a good opportunity of forming impressions of them, both as individuals and as a party. They are, I think, all men who have had, like Mr. Glassy, a Labour education—that is, they have been wage-earners. The committee of the party at the time consisted of three miners, one carpenter, and one blacksmith. They struck me as being quite up to the best-informed of English trade union leaders, both in political education and in general knowledge of economic questions. I think I noted a marked divergence of views between a section of the party who are more closely allied with the heads of the Labour organization, and more under the influence of the recognized and powerful organ of that body—*The Worker*—and what I would term the more numerous progressive section. The motto of the paper and of the organization is, "Socialism in our time." The extra-Parliamentary leaders (as happens in all similar combinations) appeared eager to show the Parliamentary leaders how alone this was to be achieved within the specified period, and as Utopia builders are always impatient of results there is a probability—though I hope an unlikely event—of a coming cleavage between the militant Socialists and the progressive elements within the ranks of the Labour Party in the Queensland Parliament.

The issues dividing the present ministry of Sir Hugh Nelson—a pro-Pastoralist government—and the Labour opposition are pretty clearly defined. The party in power is the Capitalist Party. It is the pro-capitalist policy, which has held the

field of office from the first to the present Parliament. The Macalisters and Herberts, the McIlwraiths and Griffiths of their time were opponents for office, but not on very conflicting fundamental questions. Concessions were tentatively made from time to time to popular demands on the franchise and other issues, but whichever party got into power it was in actuality, if not in name, a pro-capitalist ministry. Neither of the parties would agree to a one-man-one-vote franchise, to the cessation of Kanaka "enlistment," or to an elective Upper Chamber. Outside of these lines some of the ministries of the past have passed useful laws, and the present government, though as staunchly capitalistic as any of its predecessors, claims to be "progressive" in all matters—not touching upon the three principles just named. Concessions on these questions would mean a Labour government, and, after that, the deluge or worse (in pastoralist opinion), "Socialism in our time."

Desiring to learn what programme a Labour ministry would try to rule the country upon, if returned to power, one of the progressive section sketched for me a policy of this kind: A programme of Co-operative State Socialism. The cost of government to be cheapened at once, and the expenditure thus saved, together with a small tax on land values, to be utilised for the carrying out of industries, by combinations of working men, on mixed Socialist and Co-operative principles. For instance, the colony was rich in gold. Only a small part of the hidden treasure had yet been got at. Government would loan public money, at low interest, to syndicates of miners for the prospecting and working of new fields, or of partially developed ones, like the Hodgkinson, the Palmer, and scores of others. The gold thus mined would remain in Queensland and be added to miners' earnings, whereas, under the existing capitalistic system, two-thirds of what is found by Queensland workers go to foreign exploiters. A similar system of state loans would be adopted for farmers, small sugar growers, dairymen, fruit culture, the dead meat industry, etc., all with the object of securing to home producers the full profits of their labour and investments. Land held near towns would be taxed into expropriation, so as to have it cultivated by occupying tenants for the growth of cheap food for the centres of mining and other mineral or manufacturing occupations.

The money for all this would be obtained on savings from the existing extravagant cost of government. An economy of £200,000 would be secured in reducing the expense of police,

administration of the law, etc., for a small population of half a million. Then, a tax on land would add to this annual state-industrial fund. The freehold land of the colony was valued at £40,000,000. One penny in the pound on this would add £160,000 a year to the previous sum. There is no land tax for national purposes on land in Queensland. There is for municipal purposes, but the law restricts it to a maximum of twopence in the pound. The pastoralists hold, on lease from the state, 280,000,000 acres, for which they only pay to the colonial exchequer one halfpenny per acre. Small grazing homesteads, on the other hand, are made to pay three-halfpence per acre, and, if the large graziers or squatters were rented at a similar rate for better land, there would be more than a million a year available from such a source for the Co-operative Commonwealth of Queensland.

To this programme there would, of course, be added political items, such as an elective Upper Chamber, one man one vote, and the cessation of Asiatic labour. It will be seen, then, from this summarised presentation of the legislative programme of a possible Queensland Labour ministry, that the present government of the colony will be under some popular compulsion to frame a counter-policy such as may enable them to continue to wield the powers of office. They have, it is true, more or less inexperienced opponents in Parliamentary tactics to face. They have, likewise, the immense advantage of being in power. The Labour Party have neither a Mr. Byrnes nor a Mr. Dalrymple to direct their forces, while the old game of dividing, in order to conquer, is not an unlikely plan of campaign, nor an impossible achievement where poor men, with the experience of wage-earning life, compose the ranks of the opposition. It is more than improbable, therefore, that a Sir Sidney Webb will be invited by the Colonial Office to accept the governorship of a Labour-ruled Queensland within the next few years.

The Nelson ministry are strong on developing Queensland's great resources and in the inbringing of capital. More people are also to be invited, and this appeared to me while in the country to be its chief want. The enormous size of the colony; the phenomenal richness of the soil over an immense extent of it; the finding of gold in almost all its districts, north, south, east, and west; its extensive coal formations, underlying areas of thousands of miles; its silver and copper mines; its sugar-growing capacities, and the general fertility of its land; all this vast potential wealth and incalculable opportunities exist to-day for a population about equal to that of Manchester!



## QUEENSLAND

I deal with most of these industries and topics as I travel through the more peopled portions of Queensland, as in my previous sketches of other colonies; and the reader who may wish to accompany me will learn what kind of a country this is, and how Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen manage to get along in a tropical land with all these good things around them.



## CHAPTER XLVII.

### COUNTRY AND GOLDFIELDS

**G**YMPIE is one of the leading goldfields of Queensland, and is distant about a hundred miles north of Brisbane. The journey from the capital is by rail, over a country remarkable for the variety of its timber growth and wild scenery. Huge mountain rocks, one of them near two thousand feet high, are seen quite close to the track. They are rounded masses of grey sandstone, and present a most extraordinary appearance as they rise from the surrounding scrub and gum forest high into the air. Captain Cook saw them when voyaging along the coast, and gave them the name of the "Glass Houses." When the sun strikes upon them—on surfaces polished by the rains and storms and the sunshine of perhaps millions of years—the idea of glass is suggested, and hence the name.

Gympie pleases you at once, with its seven hills and its cheerful, healthy-looking appearance. It is a "camp" after the Victorian character, where gold seeking does not deaden all regard for the comfort and social convenience of its inhabitants. It also wears the look of a permanent goldfield, and has plenty of good cultivated land around it. Built like Rome, on seven hills (one, by the way, named "O'Connell"), Gympie has quite a captivating aspect, with its elevated and clean streets and well-built houses for a population of twelve or fourteen thousand busy people. Its origin as a goldfield dates back to the end of the Sixties, when one Nash found gold in the creek which now runs below the town. The field was worked as an alluvial mine for some time, and a great quantity of gold was found in "Nash's gully," the present site of one of the leading streets. There was a big rush from all quarters, but particularly from Maryborough, to the discovery, and industries in other parts were abandoned in the mad run to Gympie for gold. I was told by a planter in Maryborough that it was the abandonment of the sugar fields by the white workers at the time of this rush which made it




necessary for owners of sugar plantations to think of "enlisting" Kanaka labour for their cane fields. The planters wanted workers who would neither run for gold, nor join Unions, nor do anything of such an outrageous nature; labourers who would set an example of patient and obedient toil to a degenerate race of Christian miners and worse than heathen members of trade organizations. And this was why the Kanaka has been "enlisted."

Up to the present Gympie mines have yielded over 2,000,000 ounces of gold. Quartz mining followed the alluvial working, and some prolific reefs have been found which have raised the field to the position of the second largest gold-mining centre in the colony. The year of my visit 112,000 ounces had been produced, and hopes were bright as to reefs that were to be worked on the eastern and northern parts of the field, on which a great deal of development had not hitherto taken place. A large proportion of the capital invested in Gympie mines is of local enterprise, and this accounts for the comparatively prosperous look of the town. Where, as in Victoria, the profits of mines are fairly shared between local and outside speculators, there is evidence of this in the improved character of streets and dwellings. On the other hand, as in Coolgardie, Mount Morgan and Charters Towers, where nearly all the capital is of external investment, there are just the opposite appearances, born of purely wage-earning conditions and absentee capitalism.

Following also the custom obtaining in the premier gold-producing colony, there are a large number of small local companies and syndicates owning mines at Gympie. These make calls of a penny or sixpence per share as required, and pay similar dividends when earned. This system begets a great amount of petty speculation, in which almost the entire mining population indulges, and the practice adds very much to the animation of the place, if not to its more sober reputation.

There are good prospects of a valuable addition being made to the Gympie field in the direction known as the "Two mile" region, when courageous development sets in in that quarter. The actual area of systematic mining on the whole field is narrow, considering all the gold that has been got so far, and there appears, from the look of the surrounding country, no improbability in the predictions that are made as to wider valuable sources lying beyond the existing limits of known profitable operations. On the whole Gympie sends you away with a very good impression of the whole place, population, town, and surrounding



country. Gympie had some special attractions for me. Some very early friends and comrades of mine of the troubled period of '67 were found there, while the first branch of the Land League in Australia was formed among its sturdy, patriotic, and generous Irish-born mining population. Needless to add that I had, in the American sense of the saying, "a very good time" while in the little city of the seven hills by the Mary river.

Maryborough, thirty or forty miles farther north, is in one of the most prosperous districts of Queensland, and a town with every prospect of a still more prosperous future. It has communication with the sea up the estuary of the Mary river, as well as with Brisbane and the south by rail. Owing to these advantages and to the coal-bearing character of the country around it has some large iron works and other flourishing manufactures. It is also a rich sugar-cane country, and employs a large number of Kanakas. I visited some of the chief cane fields in the locality, and I deal with the questions of Kanaka labour and the sugar-growing industry at some length in my chapters on Port Mackay, which is in the centre of the plantation life of the colony.

Maryborough is a pleasant and most picturesque town of about 13,000 people, with shady streets and some few handsome buildings. It has a very pretty park, and looks a "snug" and healthy place to live in. The river runs half round the place, and gives it a very attractive aspect. The land all round is of the richest kind and will grow everything. The district promised at one time to be a rich cotton-growing centre. Sugar cultivation (with Kanaka labour) has proved more profitable. A city with a hundred thousand people will one day enjoy the delightful situation, salubrious air, and rich rolling country in and around where Maryborough now stands. Soil so fruitful, resources so varied, and position so convenient for sea and railway traffic must inevitably invite, as the years go on, the industrious and the enterprising to so favoured a locality.


As the line northwards from here terminates at Bundaberg (a plantation town, which I was unfortunate in not being able to visit), I retraced my course to Brisbane from Maryborough and sailed up the coast for near a thousand miles, landing at noted places on the voyage to see what was to be seen and learned about a country certain some day, in my humble belief, to become the richest food and gold-producing land in the southern seas.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### VOYAGE TO ROCKHAMPTON

FROM Brisbane to Rockhampton by sea is some 330 miles. The route by rail is not complete, as the line from the capital northwards only extends to something over half the distance. The usual way of reaching the central and northern districts is by boat along the coast. The A.U.S.N. vessels and those of Huddart, Smith & Co. are available two or three times a week. They put in at each port on the coast that can be entered, and thus afford the inquisitive tourist the best opportunities for seeing the coast scenery, country, and people. The coast line on the voyage is visible all the way, while after passing Fraser Island you approach a perfectly calm sea, enclosed within the great Barrier Reef.

Rounding Cape Capricorn, on Curtis Island, with its splendidly situated and equipped lighthouse, we enter the wide waters of Keppel Bay and await the boat from Rockhampton, which is to perform the remainder of the journey up the wide but shallow Fitzroy river. While awaiting the boat there is an interesting little story that can be told about Gladstone, fifty miles down the coast, and which we passed during the night. This, one of the best ports on the Queensland coast, though very little used, is named after Mr. Gladstone in connection with an incident in his earlier ministerial life which has probably faded from his memory. He was Colonial Secretary in Sir Robert Peel's Ministry in 1846, and had to deal with a plan which had been formed to create a kind of "ticket-of-leave" colony in North Queensland. New South Wales was agitating at the time for the stoppage of transportation to its shores, and the question of how to dispose of the good elements among both convicted and released prisoners exercised the thoughts of many interested minds. Finally, this scheme was thought out and submitted for approval to the Colonial Secretary. Mr. Gladstone took it up with enthusiasm. It appealed strongly to his sympathies as



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a wise and humanitarian means of giving a new start in life to men who had entered upon or been thrust into criminal careers. Provisions were to be made by which farms were to be granted to each "volunteer" on arriving at this reformation colony, and cotton and other products of a tropical country were to be cultivated. Mr. Gladstone likewise contemplated adding by assisted emigration the more hopeful elements of the pauper classes of England to the saving influences of the scheme. In time the country would become developed enough to invite the influx of capital and of regular industrial settlement, which would accomplish for that, then unknown, region of Australia what haphazard colonization, out of less promising materials, had already done for other parts of the antipodes. The assent of his colleagues to the scheme was won by Mr. Gladstone's enthusiasm for it, and everything was ready to launch into existence the new colony of "North Australia," as it was to be called. An adventurous officer named Barnby, who was one of those who had first planned this project, was duly commissioned to organize the necessary expedition, and he proceeded to the task of making both history and a new settlement.

He had first thought of selecting the coast of Keppel Bay, where we now are, but had failed to find the Fitzroy river, which was then and is yet hid from view by low shores and mango swamps until you get quite close to where it enters the wide waters of the bay. A spot south of Curtis Island was chosen, and on a given day "Governor" Barnby, a "judge," a parson, clerks, and all the other essential foundations for a British province, landed and christened the place "Gladstone." In the meantime the Peel Ministry had been overthrown, and Mr. Gladstone's successor, failing to see the wisdom or use of such a "North Australia" as that contemplated, cancelled the whole project. What became of the "governor," his "judges" and state chaplains, the record discloseth not. But the port of Gladstone remains and is, I am told, the very best on the coast, as a place with such a name deserves to be.

Rockhampton is fifty miles up the shallow but imposing-looking Fitzroy from Keppel Bay. The bay is at least twenty miles wide, and has Curtis Island as a protection against the waters of the Pacific. The scenery is grand. The shores are wooded down to the sea, and as we are immediately under our school-time friend, "the tropical line of Capricorn," the land wears all the gorgeous vesture of the clime. On rising early in the morning to enjoy the view of the estuary of the Fitzroy,



I was made aware of our having shipped several new passengers somewhere during the night. These were huge turtles, enormous monsters, so heavy that a sailor could not lift one of them. They are plentiful off the coast, inside the Barrier Reef, from Keppel Bay up northwards. They are, of course, cheap, owing to their numbers, and it is customary, I was told, for drinking saloons in the coastal towns to have turtle soup "on tap" in the drinking bars, as appetisers for the votaries of "shandy-gaffs" or "long" drinks; just as cheese and scraps are made to answer a similar purpose in some English public-houses. Verily a country that should entice London aldermen to pay it periodical pilgrimages.

Ships drawing more than a few feet of water cannot go up the Fitzroy. Flat-bottomed boats came down to take passengers and cargo off steamers at Keppel Bay, and even these must await the advent of the favouring tide before they can wend their way up the shallow and sinuous river again. This is a serious drawback to Rockhampton. It increases the cost of any enterprise that has to depend upon shipping facilities with outside markets. But for purposes of pleasure, for outings by boats or skiffs, for excursions, picnics, and all the other riparian pleasures peculiar to Australia, the fifty miles of a river twice as wide as the Thames at London, with its timbered shores and zigzag course, leaves little to be desired in the way of pleasing scenery.

The city of Rockhampton strikes you as being a handsome one. The streets are very wide and are planted with trees. The public buildings are not of an imposing character, though a few, the court-house and some banks, show to some architectural advantage. The river cuts the city in two, and is spanned by a very fine bridge, from which a very pleasing view of the most prominent features of the place can be seen. The situation is doubly bad. The site was once a sheep run, selected solely for the water of the Fitzroy. The town is shut out from the sea breeze, and is hemmed in by hilly obstructions to coolness on each hand. To this circumstance, and to the fact of the town being actually under the tropical line, is due the reputation Rockhampton has acquired for its summer heat. The town's envious rivals in alleged cooler latitudes in the colony say there is only a sheet of tissue paper in the warm season between Rockhampton and—the tropical hereafter. What strikes you as singular, however, is the absence of any marked effect of this upon the European races. There are a large number of my countrymen among Rockhampton's citizens, and beyond looking somewhat "sun-burnt," as we say in the old land, I failed to see any tendency in



their appearance towards physical degeneracy. The men are as strongly built as those remaining in Ireland or in Great Britain, while the women are exceedingly good looking, sharing with other parts of the colony the credit of possessing very handsome specimens of the superior sex. What a few generations of tropically-reared Europeans may do in the way of changing colour and physique is matter for speculation, but for the present, at any rate, it has been demonstrated in the existence of this and other healthy and flourishing centres of population and progress that the Briton and the Celt and the Teuton from the cold north can inhabit, improve, and multiply in countries right under the southern tropic of Capricorn.

Rockhampton, like Townsville, sighs for the greatness and glories of a metropolitan existence, though its population is only about 12,000. But, as the fancied future rulers of "Centralia" will tell you, that is a larger population than London had when England's people were as few as those of Queensland. This argument settles the point, though it does not make out a clear case for "Centralia." My notes on Townsville deal with the separation movement more than do those I find under the head of Rockhampton, as the agitation began in the north and extended afterwards to these central districts. The movement has now fallen away in the north, and as a consequence it has very little vitality elsewhere beyond Rockhampton. Even here there appeared to be no enthusiasm behind it. There is a Separation League composed of some leading citizens, and its chief labour seems to consist in sending communications to the Colonial Office demanding the status of a colony for Central Queensland and the privilege of a capital for Rockhampton. Parliamentary mention of the movement is also occasionally obtained from some member of the House of Commons in the form of questions to the Colonial Secretary, and so the League continues to labour for redemption from the tyranny and neglect of Brisbane.

The arguments of the League are these: The central districts have a population of 55,000; double what the whole colony had when it obtained Home Rule. Industries and interests in the centre are different from those of the south, and are not sympathetically attended to by the government. The centre contributes £700,000 a year to the revenue of Queensland, and this money is spent on southern instead of on central developments. Money will not be advanced from Brisbane to deepen the channel of the Fitzroy, down which £3,000,000

worth of exports proceed annually. The area of the centre is 200,000 square miles; therefore, in population, revenue, resources, and size the centre is entitled to self-government, and the eleven members elected from there by the constituencies are unanimous for separation. This is a summary of the points put forward by a very intelligent deputation which waited upon me while in Rockhampton, to claim my sympathy and support for their cause. The question is, however, a domestic one, and must be left to Queenslanders to decide. An Irish Nationalist's political sympathy naturally goes out to all people who aspire for Home Rule as against alien domination. It is here where the "Centralia" case becomes weak. The "tyrants" of Brisbane can scarcely be compared in incapacity or neglect with the Downing Street rulers of Ireland. Ulster could just as reasonably ask for separation from a Home Ruled Ireland as "Centralia" can from the Home Rule government of Queensland. Anyhow, the satisfaction of the Separation League's demand would mean a Labour, and not a capitalist, state. The 10,000 shearers of the west, the mining population of Mount Morgan, and the working men generally of the central districts would be certain to elect a pro-Socialist Legislature. A "Laboralia," and not a "Centralia," would be the certain result of the success of the separation movement, a result which would, I think, be anything but pleasing to the leading spirits of the Rockhampton League. A Sir George Bernard Shaw would probably be the kind of governor the new colony would demand, instead of the lords or baronets whom the pastoralist society of the aspiring capital believe may some day figure as the head of their hoped-for colony on the Fitzroy.

The largest meat factory in Queensland is on the river a mile outside Rockhampton. Frozen and tinned meat to the value of three or four hundred thousand pounds is exported yearly by this company. I was told while in the district that the management had just concluded a contract for a two years' preserved meat supply with the French government for the French navy. About a thousand head of cattle per day are slaughtered, and a large amount of employment necessarily results from this enterprise. The rich cattle and sheep lands of the west send their food and wool produce through Rockhampton. Half a million pounds' worth of wool is about an average yearly output by the western shearing-sheds, and it is all shipped from the fortunate town on the Fitzroy. The more the goldfields of the district and the wool and cattle industries of the west are



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developed the richer will grow the city to which Sir Bernard Shaw, the future governor of "Laboralia," will be called, whenever the Rockhampton Separation League succeeds in its patriotic efforts to found a state free from Brisbane power and influence.


## CHAPTER XLIX.

### MOUNT MORGAN

**M**OUNT MORGAN, famous for its "mountain of gold," is distant some thirty miles from Rockhampton. The route is the roughest you are likely to travel in Queensland. The railway from Rockhampton to Bercaldine (going west for five or six hundred miles) passes within about a dozen miles of the celebrated goldfield, and all the traffic from the coast to the mining town has to be hauled over the Razor-back road for the remaining distance. This is bad and costly for business interests but pleasant for driving, and wild and sometimes risky as the road is, it has its compensations for the traveller who wishes to see and study every phase of Queensland life and industry. Crossing the part of the way which gives its name to the whole route is a frightful task for horses. The Razor-back ridge has to be literally climbed by man's best friend for nearly a mile up the steepest incline I have ever seen a horse compelled to face. Fully a dozen animals are needed to haul up a single load, and they have to be halted every dozen yards for a rest.

Mount Morgan is terribly disappointing when you get there in everything excepting its famed ten acres of a golden hill. The "town" is the most backward in a municipal and sanitary sense I have seen in any part of Australasia. The "streets" are mere muddy tracks, out of which the wooden causeways, with gaping holes here and there, are lifted on supports so as to give some facility for walking. The houses and shanties (many of the latter suggesting by their looks Chinese rather than European inhabitants) are perched anywhere, without apparent sense or system. Charters Towers is a city of elegance, comfort, and cleanliness compared with the town which has (a few feet outside its municipal boundary) one of the richest gold mines of the world.

Admitting all that can be said, as in the case of Charters Towers, about the ephemeral life of most goldfields, there can be no reasonable justification in the case of a property paying £300,000 a year in dividends being exempt from municipal rates.



The Mount Morgan mine did not until recently contribute a single shilling to the government of the town. The owners of the property planned all that beforehand. They carefully excluded the mine from the town boundary, so as to free themselves from the legal obligation of helping to render it a healthy and decent place of abode for their workmen and others who make the fortunes of the proprietors. A few years ago it became necessary to extend the dumping ground for the tailings from the mine into the municipal area, and a sum of eighty or a hundred pounds has been diverted yearly since then from the shareholders' profits towards the sanitary welfare of the citizens.

Miners' wages are lower here than on any other goldfield in Australia. Men work in shifts of eight hours for seven and sixpence a day. There being only one employer, the company owning the Mount, the wages given are the measure of its will and not that of competition with other employers. I noticed an air of subserviency about the employees here that I had not observed on any other goldfield or anywhere else in the colonies. This was doubtless due to a similar cause to that explaining the low rate of wages—the single source of employment. The company has its grip on place and people, and I came away with the strong conviction that the management of the concern neither deserved the unrivalled property which it possessed nor the labours of those whom it treated as if its produce were granite blocks instead of tons of gold.

As a gold mine Mount Morgan is unique in every way. It has yielded more gold, in proportion to the size of the property, than any other single mine in existence. The miners mine more gold per man than in any other known mine; the average being about £400 per miner annually—the miner receiving about one-fourth of this in wages for his share of the production. The gold is found in a brown hematite ore, and is so finely distributed in its matrix as to be imperceptible even to a magnifying glass. The stone is treated—chemically “roasted”—in chlorination cylinders in order to have the embedded gold extracted, and the yield averages two or three ounces per ton of incinerated rock. The hill rises to an elevation of six or seven hundred feet above a small stream called the Dee river, and was originally cone-shaped. It is now hacked, cut, and tunnelled out of all form, and presents an extraordinary appearance when viewed from the opposite side of the valley—men, machines, cranes, and hoists working away, day and night, on the sides of the mount like ants on an anthill.

The story of the discovery of this golden mountain is not



without some romantic interest. One Sandy Gordon and his brother selected some grazing pasture in this district from a stockman named McKinlay in the early Seventies. The latter's employers had the country in which the unknown mine lay embraced in a sheep run, in which they carried on their pastoralist business with McKinlay as their stock manager. Sandy Gordon fell in love with Miss McKinlay and married her. Times went badly with him, and he sought employment from people named Morgan. Mrs. Gordon one day showed her husband a piece of stone which her father had given to her. It had been picked up by him at a creek near a hill. Gordon felt that the stone was unusually heavy, and showed it as a curiosity to his employer Morgan. Its true nature was at once apparent to him, and he offered £20 to Gordon to take him to where the stone was found. This was done, and the Morgan brothers forthwith purchased that part of the hill which was situated in Gordon's selection at the price of one pound per acre. The ten acres or so comprised in the hill have since yielded up £5,000,000 worth of gold, and the property is still worth double that sum in the market. How the Morgans disposed of their lucky bargain, and how the D'Arcys and the Halls and the Pattisons and others made fortunes in turn out of it, and finally floated it as a company for a million, are matters of common gold-mining history. The mine stands to-day the richest single property of the kind in the world, and produces the purest gold yet found anywhere.

Geologists differ as to the origin of this singular hill of gold. It stands isolated in its formation. No gold has yet been found anywhere around it, though I was assured by miners on the spot that other mines of the same character would yet be unearthed in the locality. This is always the faith of those who have pegged out claims near a famous mine. Fortune will smile on them, too, some day. It goes without saying that every yard of ground within miles of the fabulously rich find of the Morgans has been prospected and scanned by the keenest experts, but without finding up to the present any continuation of the marvellous formation of the mount. This formation is unlike that of any other goldfield. It is neither a quartz, cement, nor an alluvial mine. It is supposed by some authorities to have been the result of thermal action in periods of tertiary activity on gold deposits down below, which sent the golden fluid in a hematite mixture up in a kind of golden geyser, which in time cooled down into Mount Morgan.



## CHAPTER L.

### KANAKA LABOUR

**P**ORT MACKAY is two hundred miles north of Keppel Bay. On emerging from this bay the ship steers her course in and out among numerous coral islands. These are all the work of the tiny marine insect of that name, and the imagination is exercised in efforts to think of the amount of time these little island-builders occupied in completing their labours. Passing Cape Townsend about midway on our journey the islands become so numerous that they appear to stud the sea as the stars do the floor of the heavens. Here, too, the sea becomes as smooth as the surface of a mill-pond, and the vessel glides along in her labyrinthian course, affording endless changing vistas of the islands with their luxuriant tropical growths. The time occupied in covering these two hundred miles is all too short. It is a feast of unique land and seascape beauty all the way, and makes you wish it could be indefinitely prolonged.

In landing at Mackay you have an opportunity of investigating the Kanaka Labour question. The district along the Pioneer river may be said to be the centre of the sugar industry of Queensland, and no better place could be selected in the colony for such a purpose. In one other respect, too, Mackay offered special opportunities to anyone wishful to inquire into the very vexed and "mixed" question involved in this "enlistment" of South Sea Islanders for plantation labour. A new departure has recently been made by the government in its desire to help the sugar planters, and Mackay was first chosen as the most suitable place in which to test the economic value of the aid thus given by the state to this important industry. This assistance consists in offering to co-operative associations of cane-growing farmers, wherever formed, loans at moderate interest for the building and equipment of sugar mills; the purpose of the government being to enable small cultivators to reap the profits arising from the crushing as well as the growing of the sugar cane. The

importance of this to such small cultivators—farmers with 160 or 200 acres—may be estimated from the fact that the Racecourse Central Mills, near Mackay, built and equipped under this scheme, earned over £13,000 in 1894. The average profit on the crushing of a ton of cane (when the machinery would be kept fully employed) would amount to about £3 10s.

The bearing of these facts upon the Kanaka question is obvious. The contention of the large plantation owners, and of sugar manufacturers generally, was, and is, that sugar cannot be profitably made in Queensland in competition with Java and other countries employing cheap labour, except under similar economic conditions. If, therefore, the growing of the sugar cane is to remain a Queensland industry, Kanakas, or other cheap workers, become indispensable to its existence. To this argument is added the contention that the kind of labour required in the cultivation of sugar, and the tropical nature of the necessary climate, render white labour all but impossible of employment. This is the commercial argument. The moral issue involved in the Kanaka question is sought to be satisfied on the theory that the South Sea Islanders are not kidnapped; that they "enlist" for the work as free agents; are well treated, educated, and Christianized by their employers. The experiment at Mackay throws much new light upon all this contention.

But before dealing with the economic and commercial aspects of Kanaka labour, I will describe how the islanders are "enlisted" for the plantations. A planter at Mackay detailed the process to me, in, of course, its least objectionable phase, as follows: When planters or cane farmers want Kanakas they go to a shipping agent "in the trade." These agents are found in Mackay and in the other ports of Queensland. Applications are thus lodged with the "recruiting" agent, and when these amount to a number large enough to guarantee the expense and profit of a voyage, the ship sails for the islands of the Pacific. A deposit of £3 for each "boy" (Kanaka) has to be paid in advance through the agent to the government, as a capitation tax. Then there is the cost of stamps for agreement forms, amounting to five shillings, and this sum of £3 5s. goes to the state towards its expenses in providing inspectors, making regulations, etc. A government agent accompanies each "recruiting" ship. He is supposed to have a knowledge of the Kanaka tongue, and is instructed to see that no islander is "enlisted" until a "fair agreement" is first made between him and the shipping agent. No one under fifteen is to be allowed to

"enlist." It is also enjoined on the agent of the government to see that if a Kanaka regrets the "engagement," after the agreement has been made, he is to be allowed to leave the ship, if she has not sailed from the island. These are the government instructions to its agent, and they look fair enough, on paper.

The real facts, however, give the "enlistment" process quite another complexion. The government agent knows no more about the Kanaka tongue than the average planter and farmer. I have heard some "experts" in the language employed to Kanakas speak on a few plantations to these unhappy creatures, and there was not a syllable of any tongue but "pidgin" English in the jargon used. Despite my benevolent planter's wish to clothe the transaction at the islands with the raiment of a free and intelligible contract, I have to come to the conclusion that the unfortunate "recruit" knows little or nothing about the conditions of his "enlistment," or of the work he will have to do, or of rations or wages, when he makes his mark at the foot of the document on board the ship.

The usual plan of recruiting on reaching a desirable island—one that has not been already too much depopulated—is to hawk presents among the suitable Kanakas, and induce them to visit the ship; or to go to the recognized chief of the island and "square" him for the whole transaction. This latter is the easier method. It gives least trouble all round. The main bargain is made with the man who can command the required number of his subjects to accompany the agent, and to this plan the government official finds no objection, for the following reasons: It is an easy matter, for a man with a mind so disposed, to look upon such "recruiting" as being a real boon for the Kanakas. They are being taken from savage surroundings to a Christian land. Civilization will follow. Habits of steady industry will supersede the barbarous customs of the islands. Food will be plentiful, wages will be paid, and the "recruit" can return, if he pleases, at the end of the three years' term fixed in the agreement. This is how most of the interested people feel and talk on the question in Queensland, and the inspecting agents of the government, who accompany the Kanaka-catching ships, all belong to the class who hold these views.

On arriving in Queensland all the "recruits" are examined by a government officer to ascertain if they are physically fit for the work they will be required to perform. Those (if any) who are diseased are supposed to be sent back.



Of course the recruiting agent would not be likely to "enlist" any such undesirable "volunteers." It would not pay. Other inquiries are also held as to whether the enlistment was according to law, and particularly if any force was employed by the Kanaka catcher in the work of searching for labour. When these investigations are over the "boys" are distributed among the original applicants; in proportion to the numbers ordered and paid for. Agreements as to wages, food, etc., are duly signed in presence of government officials, and copies are sent to the Polynesian Office at Brisbane; the planters or farmers also obtaining copies for their guidance.

I was told by planters that each "boy" thus recruited cost a farmer or planter £20 before his wages began. This sum represents the expenditure and profits of the shipping agent in finding Kanakas. The wages of the "boys" vary. A "raw" one (a new "recruit") will receive £6 a year with "house," food, and clothing. An "old hand" (one who has served his term of three years and remains in Queensland) on signing for another period will get £12, while some knowing ones ask £20 for their services. The "houses" that are provided are barns or sheds, or any kind of building that may chance to be on the farm or plantation. I visited several groups of such places on the Mackay and other plantations. They resembled, as a rule, a fairly clean stable for a horse or donkey. Some of the Kanakas prefer grass "humpies," corresponding more or less with their native huts in the islands. In buildings where they sleep in association on plantations their beds consist of rough planks formed into benches. Where ordinary cottages have been provided the accommodation is, of course, so much more civilized.

The employer must furnish his "boys" with a pair of blankets per annum and a suit of working clothes twice a year. Medical attendance is also included in the terms of engagement. The rations are practically uniform, and are plentiful and good. They consist of (per day)  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. of beef or mutton; 2 lbs. of bread or flour; 4 ozs. of rice;  $\frac{1}{4}$  oz. of tea;  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of sugar, with pepper and salt; 3 lbs. of potatoes, in lieu of rice, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of tobacco per week.

Wages must be paid in gold or in treasury notes, half-yearly, in presence of the government inspector. The Kanakas are encouraged to put their earnings in the savings banks, and most of them do so, I was told. As a rule they are fond of cheap jewellery, and buy a good deal of it. They are scrupulously honest. I was told by more than one dealer in Mackay and



Maryborough that the "boys" came at once after receiving their wages and paid for the credit given them in the interim. They are said to be generous among themselves when no feud exists over their women, or "Marys," as the planters name their female workers. If a Kanaka has a "Mary" on "enlisting," the woman comes too and works like a man if not nursing a child. "Boys" are said to sell their women for money or jewellery occasionally. In other respects the women are not molested at work or in association by their male companions.

I saw a large number of Kanakas at labour in the various employments on cane fields. I also spoke to many of them, away from their masters and overseers. In every instance I went to plantations where my visit was not expected. I declined special invitations to "show" farms. I was anxious to see the Kanakas at their ordinary tasks, and to visit their homes or "humpies" when no preparations for visitors would be in order. I had therefore fair opportunities of seeing these people just as they labour and live all the year round. I saw them cutting and loading cane, hoeing for planting, and doing all the other kinds of work connected with the cane-growing industry.

They are not "driven" in their task, as slaves would be, but they look when at labour more like prison gangs than groups of free workers. They appeared to work sullenly, as if they had been deceived as to the continuous nature of the labour they would be required to perform. None of them complained to me about the work being hard, or of the food being bad or insufficient. But in no single instance did man or woman of them say, in reply to my questions on the point, that they liked the work or the country. Without a single exception the answer to the question, "Would you rather go back to the islands than stay here," was "Yes." This was noticeably the case with the women. These were generally good-looking, and appeared rather shy in manner. I singled one out on one farm, and talked to her for five minutes about her work and antecedents. In her demeanour she reminded me very much (apart from her dark colour) of a Connemara peasant woman digging turf. There was the same appearance of womanly shyness and total absence of anything like mannish manners or brazen femininity. She understood "pidgin" English very well, and told me she had come to the country because her man had been induced to "enlist," and she wanted to go with him. She said nothing would please her more than to be allowed to go back to her native island.

Women are very few among the enlisted Kanakas. They are not as much sought for by "recruiting" agents as male workers. Some of the islands in the Pacific have been cleared of all the adult male population by means of this system. The French of Numea search the islands for natives to work the nickel mines in that place, and they are said to treat their "boys" much more severely than the Queensland planters do. It is actual slavery in Numea. I was told on crossing the Pacific, by those who knew the facts, that one of the results of this "recruiting" system, on one of the islands, was to compel a band of fifty young women to "man" boats and visit a neighbouring island, on a mission bearing some resemblance to that which Romulus's soldiers went upon to the country of the Sabines. This story may possibly be exaggerated, but I am convinced, from what I have learned in various ways about the effects of the taking away of adult males from numerous islands in the Pacific, that great injury has been done to them by this work of "civilizing" such recruits. From all accounts, these islanders were very free from a number of the worst-known evils and vices until brought in contact with that boasted civilization which has been so prolific in their production.

The Kanakas are very intelligent-looking, both men and women. The men, as a rule, are of moderate stature, averaging five feet six or seven, but well proportioned and strong. The faces are in no way repulsive. They suggest potential passions, however, of a bad kind if provoked into activity. The heads are well formed, and are not like negro heads except in colour. The forehead does not slope inwards. It forms a favourable intellectual comparison with the heads of land labourers among European races. Kanakas are fond of melody, and learn to play accordions and other of the simpler instruments of music. I noticed, both at Mackay and Maryborough, rude attempts at "art" on the doors and walls of their residences. Figures of men and animals—none of an obscene kind—are made with chalk or pencil on wooden rails and doors, and show evidence of some natural artistic taste.

The Kanakas are not allowed to work machinery in connection with the sugar industry. All the dangerous labour is performed by white men. The law forbids the employment of "boys" in or near the crushing mills. This is a humane arrangement. They are also supposed not to be allowed to drive horses or waggons, but I saw so many instances to the contrary that I conclude no such prohibition is contained in the regulations imposed by the government upon employers.

White labour at crushing mills is paid for in two ways: by wages and keep, and by wages only. Such workers at the Race-course Mill, near Mackay, were paid at the rate of a pound a week, including lodgings and "tucker." There were seventy-five white men employed, and their food was provided and cooked by the co-operative company owning the concern. The men worked ten hours a day, and went on night shift in turn, for which no extra pay was allowed. The work at the mills lasts only during the crushing season, and resembles in this respect the seasonal labour of the shearers in the pastoralist industry. In many Queensland sugar mills Japanese and Chinese labour is largely employed. The rate of wages for these workers will average ten or twelve shillings per week and food. The Japs are excellent workmen, and are well treated. Their government has resident Japanese inspectors in each district in which Japs are employed, who are paid by their own country to watch over the interests and the treatment of such Japanese labourers. I met one of these inspectors on a bicycle, making his rounds of the mills to see if his countrymen had any complaints to make! Cases of ill-treatment, or of trouble over wages, are at once brought under the notice of the Brisbane officials by these inspectors, and regular reports are also sent to the home government of Japan. A millowner who employed a large number of Japs told me they were the quietest and the most satisfactory workers he ever had. They formed no Unions and never threatened a strike, and (though my informant did not touch upon that delicate matter) they worked longer hours for half the Australian's wages, and cost only about one-fourth as much in daily food. What white labour earns in the sugar mills on the terms of wages without food, I do not know. It will probably average eight or ten shillings per day.

The mortality among the Kanakas is very great. It is as high as fifty in the thousand! The food is not at all suited to people inhabiting the island paradises of the Pacific, where the bread-fruit tree, the banana, and kindred edibles are nature's true nourishment for the people born and bred there. The Queensland regulation rations are generous, it is true. Feeding canaries on beef would also be generous, but scarcely calculated to make them sing and live long. Then, warm as Queensland is in the sugar-growing regions, it is too cool in the winter months and the evenings for Kanakas. The labour, food, clothing, climate, and all the circumstances of the new working life are foreign to the conditions and environment under which their upbringing was



surrounded, and this accounts for a death-rate of fifty in the thousand in a country boasting so low a rate of mortality among the white population as fifteen in the same number. Some of their deadliest diseases are unknown to our medical science. I was told it was quite common for a Kanaka to say to an overseer or shopkeeper, "me die nex week," when looking in his usual state of health, and that die he does on the day named. They contract the worst venereal diseases (unknown in their own islands, except where European or Chinese ships call), and very soon succumb to their deadly effects upon tropical constitutions. There are many other moral evils arising out of the "enlistment" of Kanakas which more than outweigh whatever economic pleas that can be urged for such labour. Many murders have been committed in Queensland by these islanders. Detection becomes difficult unless they are caught in the act. These crimes are probably the work of some of the semi-cannibalistic races which are found in parts of the Pacific. Some of these islands are noted for the docility of their inhabitants and their freedom from customs of the savage kind, while more have the evil reputation of being inhabited by treacherous and cannibal tribes. Those Kanakas seen by me in Mackay and Maryborough looked to be of the more docile race; still, murders have been committed at various times in these as in other places in the colony by these kidnapped islanders.

The question, "Is the Kanaka or similar cheap labour necessary to the existence of the sugar industry of Queensland?" receives two answers; one from the capitalist and one from the (white) Labour side of the controversy. The planter and farmer assert it is. The Labour leaders insist it is not. My conclusion, after a most careful inquiry into the whole subject, and an investigation of the work done on the cane fields, is that it is not a matter of necessity, but a means of profit. This profit (which would, of course, be reduced by the employment of white labour in exchange for black) could be built up again by the aid of such methods of state encouragement as those that have been referred to in my brief remarks upon the co-operative scheme which has been so successful in the Central Racecourse Mills, near Mackay.

A few words upon the general work of a sugar plantation in Queensland will be necessary to make this matter clear to those who have not studied it before. The labour of sugar-cane cultivation is neither difficult nor dangerous to health in Queensland. The land suitable for cane is ploughed. This work is done

by white labour. The cane is propagated by cuttings from the plant when it is about ten or eleven months old. The cuttings are from the top of the cane. An acre of healthy cuttings will produce from fifteen to thirty tons of cane; in proportion to care, irrigation, manuring, etc. It takes about eight tons of cane to produce one of sugar, and it is considered a fair yield when an acre of land will grow twenty tons of cane. The planting is generally done from February to April, but can be carried on later, and one planting will answer for two, sometimes for three, crops. The roots go some fifteen inches into the ground, and judicious watering stimulates growth and increases the yield. The plant loves a dry soil, but wants irrigation. It is most sensitive to frost, and a cold season kills the crop. Blood-and-bone manure, guano, and ordinary animal droppings are nourishing fertilisers, and give generous returns for the cost of application. All this work can be done by white labour better than by Kanaka workers. Where the trouble with the former comes in is in the hoeing and cleaning in the hot summer season. The plants grow to a height of ten feet or more, and almost touch at the top. The space left by cultivation between the standing canes is not wide. The work of cleaning away the dead leaves, which harbour cane lice, from between the stalks in an atmosphere of about a hundred and twenty in the shade, where there is practically no air, beneath the canes, is, of course, most trying to any human being, but especially to a European. It is not, however, an impossible work for men who have become acclimatised in Queensland. Where the holdings are not large German farmers' families do all this work to-day, just as the Kanakas do, only they do it better. I do not think that bands of white labourers would be got to do it on large plantations as the Kanakas do, but the large plantations are not paying as well as small holdings worked by families under the co-operative crushing mill system encouraged by the government, and it is here where the true solution of the Kanaka Labour question will be found.

The cutting of the cane when ripe is a work requiring a good deal of back-stooping, but so also do a great number of other industries in the world of wage-earning livelihood. The cutter is armed with a broad, strong knife, and severs the cane near the root with one cut; taking off the top with a back-hand stroke as he lifts it up to place it on the ground for those who load the carts that are to carry it off to the crushing mill. The Kanakan whom I saw cane-cutting did the work very dexterously, but any white man could do it at least as well. It requires neither



exceptional intelligence nor skill, only practice. Except for the stooping necessary in order to cut the cane low down, there is no laborious task involved in this part of the work of sugar cultivation.

The best, if not the only way in which to rid Queensland of the reproach and the dangers of the Kanaka Labour system, is to encourage homestead sugar cultivation; plant farmers' families on the cane-growing land; break up the large plantations, and divide them among so many small cultivators; extend the government co-operative scheme of helping small growers to build and equip crushing mills after the Mackay Central Racecourse plan, and the whole difficulty is solved, and the sugar industry placed upon a firm and prosperous foundation. This is the line of true economic development, and the line of least resistance in the necessary task of getting rid of the "black" spot upon the escutcheon of a colony which promises to become one of the richest countries in the world. The pretence of "Christianizing" the Kanaka is a piece of disgusting capitalistic hypocrisy. There were "divines" who justified the slavery of the Southern States, and tried to clothe with a religious and moral sanction the infamy of the traffic in human bodies and souls by lending the cognisance of the churches to the outrage upon natural right. Something of the kind is being done in support of the kidnapping of Kanakas. Human beings, black or white, cannot be turned into good Christians by being made worse men and women, and beyond all doubt the capitalist proselytizing of these wretched islanders for purposes of profit results in rendering them more immoral and more infamous by engrafting all the vices of civilization upon the uncorrupted, if somewhat savage, natures of these island victims of commercial greed.

Queensland grows about half the amount of sugar annually consumed in Australia. There is plenty of room, therefore, for further development to supply even a home market. The climate of north and central Queensland; the rich soil in the Cairns districts, on the Burdekin, at Mackay, Bundaberg, and Maryborough, embracing extensive areas of the finest land, are most suitable for this profitable industry, and the government of the colony has wisely stepped in with its practical encouragement to the farmers and planters who have embarked in it. The Sugar Works Guarantee Act of 1893 supplies this help. Companies of farmers and growers can be formed, and, on the security of their holdings, they can borrow state money for the erection of crushing mills; principal and interest, at five per cent., to be repaid within



palm trees spreading their graceful boughs and grateful foliage over the roadway, as if fanning the delicious air with their feathery fronds, while birds with the brightest plumage flew from field to field. Miles upon miles of cane, in all stages of growth, from the dark green of the young plant to the golden hue of the ripened stalk, lay to the right and left as we wended our way over the luscious plain, with Kanakas moving about at work and filling in with a human detail, though a reproachful one, a landscape picture of the richest hues. Beyond a plantation town, called after someone named Walker, we struck the Pioneer river, and there, under the grateful shade of a spreading tree, with the charming river running below us and birds skimming its limpid surface, we remembered that even in an Eden-looking land a lunch basket had attractions of its own after a fifty-mile ride, not to be despised amidst scenery which recalled Moore's lines about the island :—

“Where a leaf never fades in the still blooming bowers,  
And the bee banquets on through a whole year of flowers ;  
And the sun loves to pause with so fond a delay  
That night only draws a thin veil over day.”

## CHAPTER LI.

### COAST SCENERY

AUSTRALIAN scenery resembles, in one respect, Australian hospitality. It plays havoc with your stock of superlative adjectives. On leaving friends at Perth you are warm in expressions of gratitude for the kindness shown to you by everybody in "W.A.," and when you make reference to it you are told, "Oh, wait until you get to Adelaide and Broken Hill in South Australia; *there* you will find the warmest-hearted people at this side of the world!" Then on departing eastwards, after coming to this same conclusion, you get a send-off like this, "Talk of our little attentions! just suspend judgment until you know Melbourne, Ballarat, and other places in Victoria." In due course you add recollections of these cities and of their hospitable people to your congested memory, and essay to give expression to your feelings. But the now customary remark is only evoked: you are warned that Sydney and New South Wales are credited with being proverbial for their exceptional qualities in entertaining visitors from the old countries. And so you travel along, learning in turn that your hosts by the matchless "harbour" have a higher opinion of Queensland's warmth of greeting for the friendly stranger than you have of their own, and when you reach Queensland they generously award the palm to New Zealand. It is just bewildering in its qualities of superlativeness, and, in a like manner, so is the scenery which delights your eye as you travel on from colony to colony.

After leaving Mackay you sail in among the thousand islands, lying inside what is known as the Barrier Reef; a sea wall of coral-built structure extending a thousand miles northwards, and standing out perhaps a hundred miles or more from the coast off the mouth of the Pioneer river, and gradually approaching the land as the country north of Townsville is reached. No ships can with safety cross this reef. It is a complete sea fortification

against possible aggressions from beyond, while inside there is the smoothness of a Venetian canal, and a depth that will permit the largest vessels to thread their course through the island-strewn waterway. Whit-Sunday Passage, so named by Captain Cook, is some fifty miles of enchanting scenery. Beyond this larger island hundreds more of smaller size and of every shape are met with, just as if Nature had organized a grand exposition of island manufacture, and had brought the choicest gems of her creation within the placid waters of this great lagoon. Your fancy pictures Killarney as having been stolen from these seas by some divinity friendly to Ireland in the early years of the world. A sail through the passage by moonlight is an experience never to fade from the delighted memory. To the west you see the moonlit summits of the hills, like so many ghostly sentinels standing guard over the shore, the islands reposing on the waveless waters around you, and bathed in the soft, beautiful light of the starlit sky, while away to the east you imagine you hear—but it is only a fancy—the booming of the breakers against the distant reefs, as if the sea were singing a siren song of enchantment to lure us to where many a ship has dashed herself against the coral breastwork that guards the coast of Queensland against the Pacific Ocean. There is no other coastal scenery in the world to equal this in changing vistas of loveliness and grandeur. You move along in endless windings in and around the islands of coral, with their silvery sands and grassy slopes, and wooded vesture of varied foliage. I journeyed by night in one trip, and by day in another, through this enchanted world of coral islands, and had a double enjoyment of its scenic glories. The islands are clad with pine trees and the jungle growths of the tropical climate in which they lie, while the ships go so near to the coast, now of the mainland, now of some island, that you can throw a stone from sea to shore with ease.

Looking out upon part of this Nature's necklace of coral islands, you find a little town which enjoys one of the loveliest prospects in the colony. It is Bowen, so called after, I believe, an Irish governor of Queensland. It stands on an elevation gently rising up from a small harbour called Port Denison, while behind it there stretches an exceedingly rich country, extending to the mountain range in the distance. Look where you may from this favoured spot on the coast of this great colony you see a combined prospect of the beauty and natural wealth with which it is blessed, and I venture to predict that



some day, in the not distant future a great and handsome city will look out upon the Pacific and its clusters of busy islands from above Port Denison. The rich fat soil of the Normanby country is not far away from Bowen. The Normandy gold-fields are within fifty miles, and this same district has hoards of silver and copper, as well as of the yellow metal being numbered among its undeveloped resources. Land that will grow anything, from cabbages to sugar cane, lies inland and along the coast awaiting the advent of hands that will till it and take out its latent wealth. If I had the power to plant down five thousand families where they would find a rich soil, a sea teeming with fish and turtle, a climate warm but salubrious, and a scenery of unsurpassed attractions, I would place them on the coastal lands of the Bowen region. The little harbour is accessible to passing steamers, and has therefore all the necessary facilities for the future trade which will flow outwards from districts of such rich and varied natural wealth when that country is better known and populated. Bowen is at present more of a health resort—a holiday place—than a town of industry or enterprise; but it cannot long remain neglected in these respects by the wealth-seekers who know of the resources of the country around it.

Townsville was my next port of call on the twelve hundred miles of coasting journey north from Sydney, and I regret it was the northern limit of my trip. I was told on reaching this charming little city that what I had seen by way of scenery coming up the coast was as nothing compared with the passage of the Hinchinbrook and its twenty miles of wondrous beauty, and the Barron Falls and Mourilyan Bay, and on to the Lord knows how many other natural marvels that are said to beggar the resources of the latest dictionaries to describe. It was very tantalizing, but I had feasted so long and so much on land and waterscape and all the rest that my mind was suffering from scenic indigestion, and I had to stop at Townsville and try and learn all about the Separation movement of the north, of which it is the centre.

Townsville has an immense opinion of itself. Brisbane is only a one-horse city in the estimation of those who live under the shelter of Castle Hill. What is Moreton Bay to Cleveland Bay? Compare the bald and barren aspects of Stradbroke Island with the appearance of Magnetic Island. Look at the giant grandeur of Mount Elliot! Picture Townsville's unrivalled situation with Charters Towers in the hinterland and a d'

other goldfields "round the corner," like the Hodgkinson and the Palmer, and say how a place like Brisbane, which produces nothing but politicians and bad laws, can compare with the potential Sydney of the North. And to think that such a city and country should be ruled "by a Dublin Castle kind of government," as an ardent separationist exclaimed to me, "is both a humiliation and a crime, sir." Apart from Townsville's very natural desire to be the capital of a separate colony, it is an attractive and enterprising little city with twelve or fifteen thousand people. The situation is very picturesque, the town being built on the banks of a wide bay and up against and around a hill rising a thousand feet immediately above the shore-line. Mount Elliot, some miles in the background, lifts its head five thousand feet high, and stands the unrivalled mountain sentinel of the district.

The town has no striking features in itself. Its public and other buildings are of a modest order of architecture, but this will, of course, be changed when the capital of a colony looks out upon Cleveland Bay. Charters Towers, eighty miles away, is the best asset in Townsville's prosperity, as the trade of that most flourishing goldfield all files through the little seaport city. This is chiefly why its exports and imports total something like £3,000,000 a year. I visited a very promising meat-freezing works at Ross Creek, near Townsville, which promises to expand into a large and profitable industry. It is one of several similar meat factories worked by a big Queensland company in various parts of the colony. The number of cattle killed for exportation as frozen meat and as preserved and boiled-down beef from the whole of North Queensland for the first half-year of 1895 numbered over sixty thousand, and the wages paid in the various works at Burketown, Normanton, Cardwell, Ross River, Alligator Creek, Torrens Creek, the Burdekin, and other smaller factories would, I was told, total £45,000. The average price of a cow in North Queensland would, I believe, be no more than £4. A similar animal, bred in America, can be sold for £10 as dead meat in England. When the Queensland animal reaches England also some big profits will accrue to whoever is lucky enough to solve the problem of distance and preservation—surely no impossible task in these days of science and invention.

I went through the meat factory at Ross Creek and learned some interesting facts about this infant industry. They slaughtered about 200 animals per day. The animals are

speared from a platform as they enter a concrete pen and are instantly killed. The head is severed at once, and the animal is strung up by machinery to allow the blood to drain away to where it mixes with earth and forms the best manure for sugar-cane ground. All the animals are carefully selected for the export frozen trade, and any spot or bruise will cause a carcase to be put on one side for some other use. Only the very best beasts are sent into the freezing chambers in quarters.

To generate the necessary amount of cold air to perform this work most costly machinery is required. This is a marvel of scientific adaptation to commercial needs, and ought to render the fitting up of vessels for suitable carriage purposes from Normanton or Townsville to London or Liverpool a comparatively trivial matter. The export of meat, frozen and preserved, from all the colony in 1895 was about 70,000,000 lbs., from some forty factories, large and small.

The visitor to Townsville will leave it with regret, and will carry away the most pleasant recollections of its people. They uphold in every way Queensland's reputation for hospitality, and whether their city remains as it is, the capital of the North, or becomes the seat of a future Legislature, it will always have the good wishes of those who have been fortunate enough to experience its ideal winter climate and the attentions of its courteous and kindly citizens.

I did not find the separation sentiment as strong in North Queensland as I expected. The agitation had largely died out, owing, it is alleged, to some of the prominent leaders having taken posts from the "foreign" government of Brisbane. There is, however, another and an equally probable explanation of its subsidence. The movement virtually began as a policy of retaliation on the part of the northern sugar interest against a proposal to stop all further Kanaka labour "enlistment." Prominent politicians, in an effort to obtain the support of the working men, hinted on the hustings at such a change, and of a possible reshipping of Kanakas back to their islands in the Pacific. This electioneering programme alarmed the planters, who, in turn, raised the issue of separation from Brisbane. They had very plausible facts on which to rest their demand for the partition of Queensland into two colonies. The North has more than twice the population Moreton Bay territory had when it obtained separation from New South Wales. The shipping, trade, and industries of the North are also



on a larger and more prosperous scale than were those of the colony when it became Queensland and established its capital at Brisbane. The size and extent of the country likewise supported the contention of the separationists. A territory of 600,000 square miles was too extensive to be properly administered under one Legislature. The seat of government was too far away. The interests, welfare, and progress of the North were subordinated to the local advantages of the capital, which was over a thousand miles distant from portions of the neglected northern districts of the colony. Northern taxes were expended for southern purposes, and the politicians and office seekers of Brisbane were the enemies and obstructors of that development and expansion of mines, plantations, trade, and commerce of the North which required the fostering care of a local legislature and government. Thus reasoned and declared the separationists. But a change soon came over the enthusiasm of the leaders. Politicians who had obtained power on the anti-Kanaka question wheeled round upon becoming ministers, and upheld what they had promised to put down. Then the Labour Party sprang into Parliamentary power and prominence, and some of the ardent spirits of the separation movement found it consistent with their former attitude to accept government places under the previously detested Brisbane *régime*.

But it was the election of Labour members for Charters Towers, Townsville, and other northern constituencies which gave the severest set-back to the planters' agitation. They and other property holders found themselves in this fix: There was "the devil" of a Brisbane rule and "the deep sea" of probable Labour ascendancy at Townsville. Was it wise to exchange existing ills for possible greater ones? A "Northralia" as a separate colony might mean a Legislature having an overwhelming majority of Trades Unionists and a probable Socialist ministry. The fears of Brisbane were as nothing compared with a dread of Townsville as the seat of an anti-capitalist administration, and so the agitation for Home Rule for the North was allowed to subside. It is still kept alive, however, by some earnest separationists, who believe it will be possible to influence the Imperial authorities to sanction such a division of the existing colony as they demand. This faith in the Imperial Parliament will be of no avail unless the Legislature at Brisbane is first converted to a policy of partition. Such a contingency is, of course, possible, but unlikely.

The Legislative Council is a nominated body in which the



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particular, temperance, and other similar measures are strongly advocated, and it is therefore highly probable that these powerful influences will favour measures looking to separation and genuine socialism.



## CHAPTER LII.

### CHARTERS TOWERS

CHARTERS TOWERS is distant some eighty miles southwest from Townsville. It is reached through a rather wild-looking country, having some good grazing land. The large herds of cattle we saw on the way spoke well for the pastoralist resources of the districts. The narrow-gauge line passes by the base of the giant Mount Elliot, of which a fine view is obtainable during a large portion of the journey. Charters Towers is found in the centre of a treeless plateau. All the timber has been cut down for mining and fuel purposes, and this gives the town a very bare look. The houses are all roofed with corrugated iron—as most Queensland dwellings are—and this imparts anything but a pleasing appearance to the place when seen from an elevation. Its streets are (or were at the time of my visit) a disgrace to so wealthy a town. They were lit with oil lamps at night, while the causeways were of the most primitive and dangerous kind. One must not, of course, expect a model town on a goldfield. There is always the possibility of a “pinching-out” of reefs, and, as a consequence, a migration of the workers elsewhere. But while making every reasonable allowance for this feature of the mining industry, there is room for much needed improvement in so large and so profitable a gold-mining “camp” as Charters Towers. Possibly no field in the world has paid larger profits in proportion to the invested capital, and, as most of the earnings go to absentee owners, it is really a shame to find so little of the wealth thus easily earned devoted to the sanitation and betterment of the town. Broken Hill, in New South Wales, though only a silver-mining centre, is a far better built, cleaner, and healthier place than Charters Towers. Fully three-fourths of the gold obtained at “the Towers” goes to England, and not a single penny of this is contributed to the municipal requirements of the city! Picture a place producing nearly a million pounds’ worth of gold a year having to impose a town-tax on the wheels

of carts and drays, on the carriers and milk sellers and wood dealers, in order to save the precious dividends of the foreign shareholders from paying anything to the municipal needs of those who earn this wealth! It is right and proper of course to encourage in every legitimate way labour-giving enterprise in new countries, so as to build up industries and develop resources. People who risk their money in this way are entitled to every reasonable reward and just consideration in return; but there are equitable obligations, too, especially where, as at Charters Towers and Mount Morgan, investments have turned into huge fortunes, and there is so little risk of depreciation of value for a long time to come. But in these two great mining centres the mine owners contribute practically nothing to the government, benefit, or improvement of either town.

There are about four thousand men employed in connection with the mines of Charters Towers. Wages average £4 a week. The hours of labour are in shifts of eight each. The population is about 20,000, the largest of any town in the colony except Brisbane. It is a place throbbing with life and industry. Every thing speaks of labour and business, activity and " dividends." One mine paid £20,000 dividend for a single month's working a short time previous to my visit. Mines are all over the place, some earning such incomes as those just referred to, and others engaged in deep sinking, but all finding gold in large or small quantities. Miners told me the deeper they went in most of the properties the better the stone became. Reports of subsequent deep sinking confirm this view, and give assurance of a continuously increasing yield for a long time to come. The "Day Dawn" is the most valuable concern yet discovered on the field. It was sold in London for £600,000, and has turned out to be a splendid investment for the purchasers. "The Brilliant," "Brilliant Block," and "St. George's United" are also very noted properties. I observed that the miners working in the "Day Dawn" and in other of the leading mines have to don company's clothes and leave their own behind when going down the shafts to work. The change back on finishing their shift is insisted upon for obvious reasons. This precaution is not generally taken when the mining is in quartz reef, as the carrying away of a ton of stone in order to abstract an ounce of gold is not considered a feat of convenient achievement by any single miner. Where stone is rich in free gold there is some reasonable grounds for adopting such measures, but it is a question whether the want of confidence in skilled working men

shown by these regulations does not defeat its own end, and, like many more narrow, selfish rules or laws, beget by suggestion the very vice such rules are intended to repress.

The discovery of this valuable goldfield took place in 1872. A few poor men who were lucky enough to be "in it" have made huge fortunes out of the "find." Mr. Thomas Mills came along at the right time with the proverbial shilling of the plucky miner, and is now numbered among London's growing circle of gold-mining millionaires. Mr. Thomas Buckland was another of fortune's favourites, and can bless Charters Towers for being one of the aforesaid circle. Other fortunes of a lesser sum than the now commonplace million were likewise found, and have raised one-time working men into the aristocracy of wealth.

Since deep sinking has become so general on this goldfield serious accidents have tended to increase. Queensland has no worse a record in mining casualties than other mining regions, but this is no reason why the best precautions against accidents should not be enforced by law. Safety cages ought to be compulsory in all deep shafts, while a stricter inspection of winding wire ropes would also obviously be called for. The Mines Regulation law now in force was framed before deep sinking was much thought of on this colony's goldfields, and could, I think, be amended in this and in other respects without alarming the sensitive soul of the investing capitalist. Six or seven fatal accidents in a year is far too high a percentage for three thousand working miners, and calls for serious attention from the proper government department.

As on the permanent goldfields of Victoria, there are a large number of "small shows" worked by local companies at Charters Towers. Local enterprise is enlisted in these small mines, many of which pay fair dividends, and the profits remain in the town instead of sailing off to London. Reasonable hopes are entertained by proprietors great and small that the field will turn out to be more extensive in depth and extent than the actual working area of two or three thousand acres would suggest. Looking at the character of the surrounding country, and judging from the fact that reefs have been found where no outcrop indications existed, there is no improbability in the prevailing hopes of the small owners of some day finding their holdings jumping into the position and value of first cousins to the "Day Dawns" and "Brilliant."

"I had good reason to come away with a warm opinion of the people of this flourishing goldfield. They are worthy of a

handsomer and much healthier town, and I trust they will succeed in making the lucky fortune-finders disgorge a little of their princely incomes towards rendering Charters Towers a place worthy of its bright and likeable inhabitants. They are up-to-date in progressive opinion, and return two Labour members to the Legislative Assembly. They have built some excellent schools for the children, that of the Catholic nuns being one of the best equipped in teachers in North Queensland. There is also a very good hospital and other institutions of public utility liberally supported by the citizens.

My journey in Queensland did not extend far enough north or west to enable me to visit the Hodgkinson, Palmer, Etheridge, Croydon, and the other goldfields that lie scattered over the country due north and north-west of Charters Towers. These districts possess many valuable mines, and have produced large quantities of gold; but want of railway connection has retarded development and reserved what will be, from all accounts, profitable fields for future enterprise. I had the advantage during the sea journey up and down the coast of Queensland of meeting experienced miners and interested capitalists who knew these regions well, and who imparted a good deal of information about Queensland mining and mining laws. Some of these experts had been in Western Australia, and were returning home convinced that there was much more gold in their own than in the western colony. Since jotting down the views of these authorities on the goldfields of North Queensland I have read the reports issued by the government geologists and mining officials, and the facts and statements given in these documents strongly confirm the favourable opinions of my travelling companions on the fields above mentioned. The Hodgkinson field has been worked on and off in a very unscientific way for the past twenty years, and has yielded to the roughest kind of mining over 200,000 ounces of gold, in stone averaging an ounce and a half to the ton. The field is practically abandoned now to Chinese and white fossickers. It is only some eighty miles west from Cairns, with a railway about half the distance, which may extend the whole way some day. It is said that the gold-yielding area of this district extends to some five hundred square miles. Timber for fuel is not too plentiful. Several good mines, with stone averaging over two ounces, have been abandoned on account of water coming in, and of there being no pumping machinery to cope with it. It is only a question of a little time, therefore, until the necessary enterprise will find its way to this region and relieve it of its buried treasure.



North of the Hodgkinson, but practically a continuation of the same auriferous formation, there is the extensive Palmer goldfield. This is said to cover an extent of two hundred miles. It was a famous alluvial field when first discovered, and £5,000,000 worth of gold was picked up along the line of the Palmer and its tributaries. It is contended that where such a quantity of alluvial gold was found there must be rich reefs somewhere near, and this reasonable theory will doubtless invite such development as will determine the fact some day. The centre of this field is about a hundred miles from Cooktown, and a railway runs half the distance.

Away south-west from these districts, and about midway between Charters Towers and Normanton in a north-west direction from the former, lies the goldfields of the Etheridge, said to extend over an area of more than a thousand square miles. The place is two hundred miles from Normanton, and the cost of carriage is very heavy and tells against development. About 30,000 ounces are produced annually by the most primitive mining methods on this field. Still further west, and nearer the base of the coast line of the Gulf of Carpentaria, the very promising Croydon fields are found. Croydon is by no means an easy locality to get at. It was the very first place in Australasia I received a telegraphic invitation from when I landed at Albany, in Western Australia, and in my then ignorance of the topography of the antipodes I replied I would go there with pleasure, believing it might be some suburb of Brisbane! I discovered afterwards that it would involve at least a fortnight's sail from the capital of Queensland, round Cape York, to the distant "suburb" near the gulf. Gold was first found here in 1887, and there has been a steadily growing output of over 50,000 ounces a year since then. It is a very dry region, I believe, and the mining industry is handicapped for want of sufficient water, or rather, a system of proper water-storage. The mining on this field is largely carried on by small companies, with only a little capital to work with, and I was told by an experienced miner who had been three years on the Croydon that it had enormous resources, and would become one of the leading fields of Queensland some day.

The mining laws of Queensland are the subject of complaint both by capitalists and miners; the one interest finding fault with their injurious bearing upon investments, the other asserting that they are not sufficiently favourable to labour. The mining lease is restricted to twenty-five acres, and the rent is fixed at one



pound per acre. Doubtless the poor proprietors of Mount Morgan, who obtain a quarter of a million a year out of that mountain of gold, have a grievance in the payment of a rent of £10 per annum to the tyrannical government at Brisbane for the right to extract this gold from what is still, technically, Crown property. The ordinary impartial critic will fail to see where the injustice comes in. The law requires that one workman must be employed per each acre of leased mining land, and it is to this provision that violent objection is taken by the capitalists. Where the mine turns out to be a prize the regulation is not a burthen, but a necessary condition of prosperity. It is where preparatory development has to be done on an extensive scale that the complaint has some semblance of a reasonable grievance, though it is hard to see how one man to an acre of a working mine can, in reason, be considered as an unfair amount of employment. The object of the law is, of course, to check the appropriation of mining land by speculators who would tie it up and hold it for their own exclusive profits. To allow anything like this to be done would be detrimental to the welfare of the colony at large, and invite mining jobbery instead of a proper development of mining resources. In cases where valuable properties have been acquired by men of small means, who want to sell, but cannot, it presses somewhat hard upon them to have to employ the stipulated amount of labour. In those instances miners have told me it would be agreeable to all the interests concerned in mining if the law was somewhat relaxed. I think there is power left by the statute to the Department of Mines to lighten the labour obligations in cases where profitable work cannot, for obvious reasons, be immediately carried on. It is also considered that the putting down of a certain amount of machinery on a lease represents a compliance with the spirit of the statute, and that this, in a way, calls for an equivalent exemption from the labour conditions. Added to these modifications of the law there is direct aid given by the government to all deep sinking. Grants of money are made by the state towards such enterprise, and diamond drills are loaned at nominal rates, and are worked by government employees without a profit, where such methods are beyond the means of small companies. The government of the colony rightly recognizes that mining brings workers into their country, and that this labour, or portions of it, will ultimately go on to the land, or into some other industry of a more lasting kind than gold-seeking. Public money expended on encouraging

mining is, therefore, an investment made in the permanent interest of all those who will be benefited by the general development of the country's resources. Round most of the mining camps of the North there are tillage and pasture lands which will attract settlers when the Palmer, the Hodgkinson, the Etheridge, and the Croydon fields succeed in bringing capital and labour to their mining wealth. Permanent settlements on the soil will follow, and the gold-hunting industry will have fulfilled the only economic good it is, in reality, capable of doing in any country—to invite or entice labour on to land. Food and fleece are, after all, the most valuable and most permanent sources of wealth for Queensland, with all its rich and still unmeasured mines of gold.

Charters Towers being the limit northwards of my tour in Queensland, I had to retrace my course southwards to Brisbane by the same sea route I travelled up by. There is nothing new to say about the enchanting sea of coral islands along the coast, and, having seen a good deal of the country on our journey, we will therefore take a glance on the way back at the land legislation of the colony, so as to learn how Queensland's vast estate of 400,000,000 acres is held and managed by the population of 500,000 people who own it.



## CHAPTER LIII.

### QUEENSLAND LAND LAWS

THE land system of Queensland is practically the same as that of the parent colony, and its administration follows on similar lines to those of New South Wales. Up to 1859 this vast north-eastern region was part of this colony, and the land was dealt with by the governor at Sydney as Crown land, to be disposed of as he might think best. Under this kind of rule, which was common to all the colonies before they obtained Home Rule, some of the best soil in Queensland (then Moreton Bay Territory) was granted or sold to such persons as the governor was pleased to sell it to. The area thus alienated was, however, infinitesimal compared with the vast extent of soil comprised within the boundaries of the country, and the 30,000 people who inhabited the colony inherited no less than 600,000 square miles, or 400,000,000 acres of land, when in 1860 their first Parliament assembled at Brisbane and assumed the government of Queensland. Measured by a familiar standard, this "estate" would make five Great Britains in area and extent, and would represent ten acres of land for every man, woman, and child living in England, Scotland, and Wales at the present time. Thirty-eight years ago it was all made over to 30,000 people by a stroke of the magic wand of Home Rule!

The Legislature of the colony has passed Acts innumerable dealing with the leasing, selection, grazing, sale by auction, occupation and tenure of land from its first session down to that of 1884. I was told by some ardent land reformers in Queensland that the whole of the land had been parted with, was gambled away by corrupt jobbing governments, that the squatters and banks were the Queensland equivalents of the grabbing Irish landlords, and owned the whole country bag and baggage. On the other hand, officials and ministers of the government assured me that only about three per cent. of the whole land of the country had been alienated altogether, and this statement corresponds

with authenticated published records. Accepting this as a correct account of the case, there is a national estate in the hands of the people of Queensland yet of four times the extent of Great Britain; a fact that affords some consolation to persons like myself who believe in land nationalization as the only land system that is just all round to all classes and best for the state. The 12,000,000 acres that have been disposed of to buyers and others comprise, of course, the choicest soils, and include lands that are situated in and around centres of population. The Darling Downs, in South Queensland, are owned by squatters. These lands are among the finest in the world, and are capable of growing the best cereals in great abundance. They are devoted almost exclusively to pastoralist purposes, but the government, under the influence of public opinion, is following in the wake of New Zealand, and purchasing back these rich lands in order to divide them up into homestead holdings. Pastoral leases for other sheep-rearing areas westwards are so liberal in their terms that the state-rent comes to much less than the interest upon the purchase money paid for land on the Downs, and this gentle economic pressure by the state upon the proprietors of these famous sheep-runs is inducing them to see the wisdom of selling their interest as landlords back to the government.

One of the latest publications of the Queensland government, dealing with the occupancy of land in that colony, summarises the existing system of land laws and administration as follows:—

"Any person of either sex over eighteen years of age—married women excepted—may ordinarily select land. This exception does not, however, apply in the case of unconditional selection. Large areas of surveyed land are available where grazing farms can be obtained up to 20,000 acres, on a thirty years' lease, at a varying annual rental according to the quality of the land, but at a minimum of one halfpenny per acre; the rental to be reassessed by the Land Board at the end of the first ten years, and each subsequent five years, but no reassessment to exceed the rent of the previous period by more than 50 per cent. Until enclosed with a substantial fence, the erection of which within three years is compulsory, the farm is held under license only, and is non-transferable. The fencing being completed, a lease is granted, which may be transferred or mortgaged, or the farm subdivided, or, with the consent of the Board, sublet. The land cannot be made freehold, and continuous occupation by the lessee or his agent is imperative.

"GRAZING HOMESTEADS are available to persons who have not selected a grazing farm, and many of the conditions are the same, but the maximum area is 2560 acres; annual rent for first ten years not to exceed 3d. per acre, and during that period residence for at least six months of each year must be personal, continuous, and *bond fide*. For the remainder of the lease residence must be continuous throughout each year, but may be by either lessee or

bailiff. The lease for the first ten years is not transferable, except on the death of the lessee. Under license from the Board two or more selectors with contiguous homesteads may work their holdings as a whole, in which case the external boundary of the combined selections need only be fenced, and personal residence by half the number of selectors will be sufficient.

"AGRICULTURAL FARMS can be selected on a fifty years' lease, with a right of purchase—the new bill proposes to reduce the term to twenty years—in areas up to 1280 acres. The land must be fenced, or permanent improvements of equivalent value effected, within five years, until when it is held under license; minimum rent, 3d. per acre per annum, subject to periodical reassessment, as in the case of grazing farms; continued residence for the full term of lease compulsory.

"The freehold of an agricultural farm not exceeding 160 acres, if occupied by the selector in person, can be obtained by five annual payments of 6d. per acre, provided the sum of 10s. per acre has been expended in improvements, and there has been *bona fide* personal residence. (Under the new bill it is proposed to extend the payment over ten years at 3d. per acre.)

"An agricultural farm exceeding 160 acres may be acquired by five years' residence of one lessee or ten years' residence of more than one. If the purchase is made within the first twelve years of the lease, the price will be that named in the proclamation of selection, but not less than 15s. per acre (proposed to be reduced to 10s.); after twelve years the price to increase in proportion to any increase of rent made at reassessment. The rent is usually about 2½ per cent. of the purchasing price, and all rents paid during personal residence count as part of purchase money.

"VILLAGE SETTLEMENT.—For this, provision is made by the survey of agricultural farms and of village allotments in the vicinity. The former can be selected on the same terms as the agricultural farms of less than 160 acres, but the condition of residence can be fulfilled on an allotment in the adjoining village, upon which also one-fifth of the required improvements may be carried out.

"CO-OPERATIVE SELECTION.—Two or more selectors of farms not exceeding 160 acres may combine under license from the Board. The residence of one selector for every 320 acres of combined farm area suffices, and surplus improvements on one farm can be credited to another of the group.

"UNCONDITIONAL SELECTION may be applied to land at prices from £1 per acre upwards, payable in twenty annual instalments. The only restriction is as to area, which is to be the same as for agricultural farms."

Under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, passed in 1894 to enable the government to buy out proprietors, such as those on the Darling Downs and other lands more suitable for cultivation than pastoralism, estates amounting to some 50,000 acres were purchased at a total cost of £120,000. The total annual rent received by the government for its own national estate of 400,000,000 acres will not average more than treble the sum thus given for the 50,000 acres bought back from the Queensland landlords! One year's rent for the land of Ireland, comprising



only 20,000,000 acres, would pay the rent for Queensland's 400,000,000 acres for a quarter of a century to come!

As explained to me by a government land agent, the Queensland land system is administered as follows:—

The colony is divided into about fifty land agents' districts. These officials receive the rents, applications for increased holdings, etc. They are, as a rule, promoted clerks from government offices, and may be required to do work for other departments, if their time is not fully occupied in that of the land. The land agents work under a Land Commissioner, who is a permanent official, and who may in some localities have ten or a dozen districts under his charge. He holds a Land Court periodically, and hears applications, complaints, etc., and decides as to selections, purchases, rents, and the rest. His decision is not final until approved of by the Land Board at Brisbane, to which tribunal all tenants or applicants can appeal. This Board consists of two members, with no specified qualification; but lawyers, of course, manage to get the posts, worth £1000 a year, and with the status of judges, being removable only by a vote of both branches of the Legislature. This Land Board travels round on circuit, and hears appeals against the decisions of the Land Commissioners. They also fix pastoral rents and revise the same at stipulated periods; pastoral leases running usually for a term of thirty years. There is also a Minister of Lands, a member of the government, responsible to Parliament and removable by the fiat of the people in a general election. There is an Assistant Under Secretary for Lands, with a salary of £800, and the Land Board has a secretary, who is also a permanent official.

The principle underlying the existing land laws of Queensland is freehold tenure. Mr. Dutton, who was the author of the Crown Lands Act of 1884, was a disciple of Henry George, and he endeavoured to recast the land laws of the colony on the state leasehold principle. The advocates of the proprietary system were too strong for him, and the landlords won the day. The Labour Party was not then in existence, otherwise the land of Queensland might probably have been semi-nationalized. The feeling against continued alienation is growing stronger every day in this as in all the other colonies, and legislative effect will be given before many years to the convictions and wishes of their working-class populations on the great questions of land ownership and tenure.

The same publication to which I have referred gives the following interesting information as to "the total area, the areas

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alienated, in process of alienation, and unalienated land" in each colony of Australasia, at the end of 1894 :—

Colony.	Alienated in Fee-simple.	In Process of Alienation under Deferred Payment.	Neither Alienated nor in Process of Alienation.	Total Area.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Queensland ...	12,175,421	1,756,958	413,905,701	427,838,080
New South Wales	24,358,717	20,316,605	154,172,678	198,848,000
Victoria ...	17,265,977	5,742,663	33,237,120	56,245,760
South Australia	9,090,906	747,659	568,523,035	578,361,600
Western Australia	5,923,946	622,982	618,013,712	624,560,640
Tasmania ...	4,807,070	...	11,970,930	16,778,000
New Zealand ...	14,064,429	3,739,136	49,057,875	66,861,440

## CHAPTER LIV.

### QUEENSLAND'S RESOURCES AND INDUSTRIES

AS already mentioned, in dealing with a similar subject in previous chapters, it is not my purpose in these sketches to enlarge upon the extent of the various products of any one colony. I can only, as a result of cursory observation, indicate in passing what these vast regions are capable of growing. The greatest industries in Queensland are those of wool and meat production. Its enormous extent of territory and the succulent nature of the grasses in many of the pasture districts make it one of the best pastoralist countries in the world. The great plains of the west suffer, like those of New South Wales, from want of water, and this scarcity, coupled with the heat that prevails in summer, generate diseases which occasionally thin the herds and lop off profits. But the growth of cattle and sheep is enormous all the same, while the rents exacted by the government for grazing areas, as already explained, are merely nominal. It is no wonder, therefore, that huge fortunes have been made by the wool growers of Queensland. Mr. Tyson owns stations and "runs" in New South Wales as well as in Queensland, but the bulk of his reputed £6,000,000 was gathered in the, to him, truly land of the golden fleece. This, the greatest of Australian squatters, is a "character" in some respects, and has impressed his strong and singular individuality upon the popular mind of both colonies. I regret I had not the pleasure of meeting him in my journeying through Australia. He travels about a great deal, despite his more than threescore years and ten, and often sleeps under a gum tree as a relief from the stuffy air-limits of a bedroom. His pet aversion is woman. New or old, young or fair, he has no use for the sex. They are the encouragement of idleness and the generators of poverty in men. They are, it is true, a necessary evil in the scheme of humanity, but are otherwise responsible for most of the afflictions with which man is handicapped in the work for wealth. Mr. Tyson's theory is this :

A young man promises well in pastoralism until he begins to think of woman. He rises at four a.m. and rides forth to see his flocks and herds, takes his regular meals with an appetite begotten of his exercise, counts his growing wealth from season to season, and sleeps the repose of the man who labours for his own profit and for the feeding of his fellow-men throughout the year. His account at the bank steadily increases, and he has no trouble, care, or distraction in his quiet home and life of freedom. In an evil moment he visits Brisbane, sees a doll-faced girl, and foolishly marries her. Angelina goes with him to the station. She finds it rough, of course, and insists upon costly furniture and a piano, which are bought for her. She plays in the morning and keeps the husband from his work. This evil habit grows until he has to employ somebody else to perform his neglected duties, who naturally mismanages his affairs. Then the balance goes at the bank, the stock follows, the house is sold, and Edwin and Angelina end by having nothing left to reside in unless it be the empty piano case.

It is said of Mr. Tyson that he never kissed a woman, smoked a pipe, or drank a glass of intoxicating liquor in his life—a truly great, unparalleled teetotal record, if true. He is by no means unpopular with the working classes. He is a land nationalizer, I was told, and sympathetic towards democratic reforms, despite his enormous wealth. The objectionable sex revenge themselves upon him by sending him their pictures along with mock invitations to marriage. This is his chief worry. He is a member of the Legislative Council of Queensland, and offered on one occasion to loan the government a sum of £2,000,000. I heard many stories of his kindness to others. His expenditure upon himself is said only to amount to £25 per month. He began life as a butcher on the Hawkesbury, in New South Wales, and may be called one of the most successful self-made men of the age.

It has been computed that in 1895 there were 200 head of sheep, cattle, and pigs (combined) to every square mile of Queensland. The human population gives about one person to the same area. This growth of meat-food, with only a total population of 450,000, leaves an enormous surplus for export, and explains why you can buy a whole sheep in Queensland for the price of a dinner of mutton cutlets in a London restaurant. I have been told by large Queensland producers that if they could sell their beef or mutton in the London market for a penny-halfpenny per pound wholesale they would make a large profit on the transac-



tion. Some day the rich co-operative societies of England may turn their attention to so vast and profitable a field for enterprise in behalf of the workers of Great Britain. One ceases to wonder, after visiting Australia, why a Tory-landlord government seeks every possible pretext for preventing the importation of live-stock into British or Irish markets. It would mean the annihilation of rent for the protectionist land interest, and, rather than any sacrifice of the kind may be possible, labourers and others must continue to pay from eightpence to a shilling per pound for their animal food. Australia will some day help to upset the rent-gathering apple cart in these three countries, nevertheless.

The annual output of wool by Queensland is largely dependent upon rainy seasons and favourable conditions. In 1895 it reached a total of 85,000,000 lbs., from which the dirty and injured qualities have to be eliminated. The average crop has doubled during the last ten years, and, despite low prices and occasional calamities, represents a great profit upon an industry which still beats the gold mines hollow in fortune making. The shearing industry of Queensland gives employment to a large number of hands on the great stations on the western tablelands. The serious strike troubles at Clermont in 1893-4 led to the infusion of much bad blood into the public life of the colony. The friction had not died out at the time of my visit. As usual there were two histories of the unfortunate occurrence, and they differed diametrically. Friends of the Shearers' Union asserted that the Pastoralist Association had the smashing of the Union as their one and only object, and got the government to perform their work for them. It was also hinted that the wool sheds were fired, not by members of the Union, but by emissaries of the pastoralists, or else by gambling loafers who haunt shearing sheds in the clipping season, and import thereto all bad vices. On the other side, pastoralists and public officials declared that the sheds were fired by agents of the Union, who believed that no power could cope with them over a thousand miles from the seat of government, and that they could dictate their own terms, under these conditions, to the squatters, making it impossible for non-Union hands to be employed. The government intervened, as it was bound to do, when "law and order" were attacked. The Irish Coercion Act of 1887, adapted to the purpose, was enacted (all the Labour members being suspended during the passage of the bill), armed forces were sent down to the disturbed districts, some leaders were arrested, tried and imprisoned, and the trouble of the west



was transferred to the Legislative Assembly at Brisbane. "Law breakers became law makers," and, as such, are much more formidable opponents of the Pastoralist Association in Brisbane than in Barcardine. Still, all this could have been accomplished just as well had there been no sheds fired, and, even after the occurrence of these reprehensible acts, had the ordinary forces of the law been utilized without borrowing the methods of Mr. Arthur Balfour's Irish coercion policy for a Home-Ruled colony.

One of the "nice" questions I was called upon at a public gathering in Brisbane to answer, in the presence of both "Coercionist" friends and Shearer sympathisers, was this: "How does a Coercion Act, passed at the instance of Queensland landlords for this colony, differ from an English Coercion Act, passed at the instance of Irish landlords for Ireland?" Probably my reply only satisfied myself. It was as follows: "Whether coercion for Ireland is right or wrong (and it is always wrong in my belief), we cannot punish the authors by placing the reins of government in other hands. In Queensland the case is different. If the ministry now in office were not justified in the course they pursued on the occasion alluded to, the people can turn them out of power at the next general election."

With a population about equal to that of Manchester, Queensland cannot do much in the way of tillage cultivation. The industrial energies of the working people are mostly taken up with mining, sugar manufacture, and shearing. Then there is only this very small population for a home market for cereals and farming produce. If Queensland had twenty millions of land-workers, as industrious as those of Belgium or France, she could supply the civilized world with food. As it is, she has only a few thousand farmers, and flour has to be imported to meet the requirements of her handful of people. One-fourth only of what is required is grown in the country, and yet there is a duty of £1 per ton placed upon all imported flour. Some authorities think that Queensland has too warm and too dry a climate for successful wheat culture. Its chief cereal crop is maize, and the yield of bushels per acre is larger than in any of the other colonies. The land, as a rule, is exceedingly rich, and will grow anything, and wheat will be no exception when that hardy bread-maker is made adaptable to the conditions of the climate of the country.

All the tropical fruits grow in Queensland in abundance. I have seen pineapples selling at twopence per dozen, equal in size and flavour to those that can be bought in Piccadilly some-

times for five shillings each. The difficulties of packing and shipping are not beyond the brains or means of commerce, and this much-prized fruit should find its way before long to Covent Garden. The vine is also a Queenslander. Anyone who cares to do so can sit under his own fig tree, grow his own grapes and oranges, or cultivate any of the other fruits that are so largely imported into England from various parts of the world. It is a land of plenty in everything except people, and when one thinks of the countless millions of acres of virgin soil, and of all its potential wealth, in this great section of the British Empire, and reflects, at the same time, upon the growing millions of landless people in the densely-populated centres of England; with their precarious livelihood and stunted lives and workhouse destiny; it gives food for much reflection on the strange laws of human distribution and of political economy.



## CHAPTER LV.

### SOUTH QUEENSLAND

ON my way back to Sydney, after a most enjoyable month in Queensland, I travelled overland, and took in the southern towns and districts of the colony, *en route* for the northern regions of New South Wales, the impressions of which I have given in chapter forty-four. Ipswich was my first stopping-place, after a thirty miles' ride from Brisbane along the tortuous course of the river of the same name; a stream with an ugly habit of flooding villages occasionally. Ipswich is of an older foundation than even Brisbane, and ran a race with it for a time for the prize of being the capital. The cruel Captain Logan, of the Moreton Bay convict days and tyrannical reputation, was probably the founder of Ipswich, near which place he was speared, it is said, by the aborigines, or, more likely, by some of the prisoners who had escaped from his brutal discipline and preferred life with the wild denizens of the bush than under his merciless authority. The country around Ipswich is a most fruitful one in its rich agricultural land and orchards, and all the products of the sub-tropical region to which it belongs. The little city is one of the busiest centres in Queensland. It is the leading coal-mining place, and has the credit of having erected the first woollen factory in the colony. It has quite a pleasing appearance, being built on ridges and their declivities, and ought, from its situation, to be a well-drained, healthy town. It boasts of some of the best schools in the country, and holds its municipal head deservedly high on account of its praiseworthy record in everything concerning the progress of Queensland, with the possible exception of early religious toleration.

The feeling against Irish Catholics, in "the early days" of thirty years ago, was worthy of what it was in England, to my own recollection, just about the same time. I spent a very interesting evening in Ipswich with one of its oldest and most

picturesque citizens, from whom I heard many a story of adventure and of combats for free speech and right of public meeting, in which the oppressed minority were not always armed with purely verbal weapons, nor with the white-robed armour of innocence, and I only wish I could re-tell these stories with all the native Kerry humour of the racy *raconteur*.

From Ipswich on to Toowoomba, across plains and over ranges, through fertile valleys and up mountain cañons, the route is one continuous succession of landscape pleasures, made all the more agreeable to the eye from the number of villages, farms, and homesteads you pass on the way, with their thriving appearance and pleasant-looking aspect. It was a region to stop in for days and not to pass by in a railway journey; but, then, you cannot stop everywhere the scenery or other attractions invite you, and get home within a twelvemonth to the Parliamentary penal servitude of Westminster. So I had to hurry through a section of Queensland I would like to have seen a good deal more of.

On the top of the range, before descending on to the Darling Downs, there are glorious glimpses of wooded mountains on every hand. All the trees of the gum family are here, with the bloodwood and ironbark and all the rest clothing the whole vista on to the horizon, with their dense and towering growth. Here and there a small patch of cleared land would appear, just to emphasize by contrast the overwhelming dominion of the all-covering forest around. At last we climb the topmost level of the range, some 3000 feet high, and, rushing through a cleft in the hills called the "gap," gaze down on Toowoomba, and beyond that upon the richest plains that are to be found on the whole Australian continent.

Some thirty-five years ago the route I have briefly sketched was travelled over by a weary and footsore band of emigrants. They had to tramp the valleys and climb the mountain sides with heavy loads and heavier hearts, bound to an unknown region. They had arrived in Brisbane a semi-mutinuous body of people. The trials and sufferings of a six months' voyage on a sailing vessel from Cork had not sweetened the tempers of the company, while, possibly, regrets at having left the valleys and the hillsides of Munster for this wild-looking new land also explained the outburst of feeling. They were emigrants from the south of Ireland, under the guidance of an able, far-seeing priest, the Rev. Father Dunn, who had induced them to exchange rack-rents and landlord oppression for the all but free holdings of the Darling Downs.

Those who may have spoken unkindly of him in those days bless his memory now, and that of Bishop O'Quinn, as they enjoy the social independence which has followed from the efforts of these two benefactors.

On reaching Toowoomba I was greeted by many a Clare tongue in Celtic, and made to feel that here, 17,000 miles away, the language of ancient Ireland had not lost its matchless power of warmth and welcome. Co-labourers with Bishop O'Quinn and the present Archbishop of Brisbane succeeded in inducing the sons of the first settlers to also go on the land around Toowoomba and Warwick, with the result that the best farms in these favoured districts are now the property of as fine a class of small yeoman farmers as any country in the world can boast of. And the girls of these two towns and districts! You see them coming to Mass on Sundays, or to market on weekdays, on horseback, handsome, well-built, and healthy, with happy looks, giving promise of a fine race of Celtic Queenslanders in the near by-and-bye.

For the foregoing reasons Toowoomba had an especial attraction for me. It was a study in social and industrial independence, with men and women of my own race as the fortunate exemplars of courage, industry, progress, and wealth. Driving to the top of a ridge, dominating both the town and the Downs in the direction of Warwick, there was a picture spread out before me of peace and plenty such as would gladden the heart of anyone who believes that with just land laws, an enlightened home government, and the right incentives to industry, such things as poverty or hunger or misery need not be known where land and labour are not, for class and selfish reasons, kept asunder. From this point of observation I find myself in my notebook jotting down a brief sketch of the view overlooking the whole district: "The soil round Toowoomba is accounted the most fertile in Queensland. There are innumerable farms scattered on every side of a town which sits, strangely enough, at the bottom of a saucer-like valley, instead of being up here on this ridge where the breeze can blow into and not over it. All the farm-houses look well built and comfortable, while the holdings appear to be highly cultivated. There is no idle land—not a perch—within sight. Wheat fields and orchards, gardens and ornamental grounds around prosperous-looking homesteads cover the landscape on every hand, giving to it the appearance of one vast agricultural estate, on which the people of a town with 7000 of a population are living in apparent comfort and contentment. I met numbers of farmers on the roads driving their teams and



waggons, families in waggons returning from market; and good horses and waggons they are, too. I passed several winsome-looking girls on horseback, and wondered were they daughters of Irish, or of Scotch or German parents. They look handsome enough to be Celtic. Talk of your Charters Towers or Mount Morgans, or Coolgardies or any other goldfield, compared with the evidence of wealth and of social independence worn by town and people here! There is no comparison. Robert Buchanan must have had such a place as that now before me in his imagination when he wrote his poem on "The Perfect State."

"Where is the perfect State,  
Early most blest and late,  
Perfect and bright?  
'T is where no palace stands  
Trembling on shifting sands  
Morning and night.

'T is where the soil is free,  
Where, far as eye may see,  
Scattered o'er hill and lee,  
Homesteads abound.  
Where clean and broad and sweet  
Market square, land, and street,  
Belted by leagues of wheat,  
Cities are found.

\* \* \* \* \*

'T is where no lives are seen  
Huddling in lanes unseen,  
Crying for food.

'T is where the home is pure,  
'T is where the bread is sure,  
'T is where the wants are fewer,  
And each want fed.  
Where plenty and peace abide,  
Where health dwells heavenly-eyed,  
Where in nooks beautified  
Slumber the dead."

Toowoomba and its homestead-peopled districts are well described in these lines. The town has broad streets, ornamented with trees, and boasts of the handsomest and best-arranged agricultural show-ground in Queensland. There are no poor in the place, while the prison, to which I paid a visit (and was welcomed by an Irish governor), contained only eight prisoners for a section of the colony containing 40,000 people. Neither poverty nor crime flourish where there is free land and

unrented industry. It is only a violation of the natural law in the behalf of special interests which invites the disinherited to break the class-made laws that protect the unnatural rights of monopoly. The soil round Toowoomba is in the occupation of workers. The rent, as I was told by an old "Inchiquin tenant" from Clare, was "not too bad here, sir." "How much per acre, now, might it be?" "Well, sir," said the old fellow, "if Lord Inchiquin got no more for his land in Clare, it's in Ennis workhouse he'd be. I am paying *twopence* an acre a year for my one hundred and fifty acres." This explains it all. Where industry has not a class of land usurers called landlords quartered upon its earnings, there will be no poverty and little crime; but where an order of social drones have the land of a country as their means of exploiting the labour of others, so that they may not have to earn their own livelihood, we have the workhouse and the prison with their pauperism and their crime.

Toowoomba has a mixed population of Irish, English, Scotch, and German. The Irish are, however, the largest section, and almost all of them are Catholic. I mention this fact simply in connection with another fact that interested me much. The mayor, who presided at my lecture, was Irish also, but a sturdy Orangeman from Lurgan, County Armagh.

The land question is not in a state of ideal settlement in this interesting region. The population is growing, and necessarily wants elbow-room. The squatters of Drayton and of the Downs own immense tracts of rich land, on which they rear their flocks of merinoes. These lands are more suited for tillage than grazing, and the people of Toowoomba and Warwick are agitating for the breaking up of the Downs into homestead farms. The government see the wisdom and necessity for this, and are contemplating a scheme for the expropriation of such of the squatter proprietors as may not otherwise be induced to sell out.

From Toowoomba to Warwick, a journey of sixty miles, you pass right through the far-famed Darling Downs, a country admitted by all who have seen or travelled over it to be, in its soil and situation, among the most favoured spots of the world. Almost every species of landscape scenery pass before you as you travel over this famous region. Vast park-like plains, well but not heavily timbered, just enough to give some shelter from the sun to flocks of fat merinoes; grassy valleys, with rivulets running between lines of the apple tree and jimbour reed or mulga scrub, with views at every turning of the line of the

distant range of hills covered with bunya pines and gums to the summit. Farms are not numerous on these plains. The land is all owned by rich squatters, having been alienated when Queensland, as Moreton Bay district, was part of New South Wales. I timed our journey through one of these squatter estates, that of Ramsay and Hodgson, and it took our train just two hours to clear the property! There are two railway stations on this one estate. Some of these mammoth sheep farms have failed, and have been sold to farmers since the price of wool has gone down. More are likely to follow, and doubtless the whole of this magnificent country will pass in time to its proper economic use, settlement, and cultivation. The soil is a rich, dark loam, and has been found as deep as twenty feet on portions of the plains.

The apple tree so frequently met with in South Queensland bears no fruit. It is very poor timber, and good only for fuel. It is, however, a sure indication of rich soil, as the spotted gum is of bad land. The bunya pines are very numerous on the hills, and make a handsome show wherever they are seen alongside of their distant relatives, the prolific but graceless gum family.

Warwick is a better-planned town than Toowoomba, and is pleasantly situated alongside the Condamine river. The population is only about five thousand, but there is a widely-peopled farming district within a radius of fifteen or twenty miles, which renders the town a far richer and more important centre than its actual size would at first suggest to a stranger. There are gold mines somewhere near, which I had no desire to visit. The land industry of places like Toowoomba and Warwick gave gold mines a decided back seat in my estimation. The difference between life and labour at a place like Mount Morgan, with its muddy tracks called "streets," its gnyah-like cabins, and the absolute subjection of the place to the company that owns the mine; and Warwick, with its wide and shady streets built round a handsomely-planted square, its fine public buildings, pretty cottage dwellings, the independent bearing of its people, and the town's general look of wealth and health, plenty and progress, was a contrast about as wide as the social poles asunder.

The Celt, and not the Saxon, is in the majority at Warwick. When Mr. John Dillon visited the town in 1890 the record declareth that he was (politically) "serenaded" by one hundred and fifty young ladies on horseback, daughters of Irish settlers.

Mr. Dillon was a bachelor then. Killarney is within easy railway reach of Warwick, but I did not visit it, despite the attractions of its name and the reputation of its scenery, which, it is said, is equal to anything in Queensland, and in no way second to its famous namesake. The Warwick district is rich in everything that can make a people comfortable and prosperous. A delightful climate, a soil equal in fruitfulness to the plains of Lombardy, and with no injustice to fear from class or caste or government. The district may not boast of millionaires, but neither has it the reproach of pauperism. Social independence, born of free industry, has its seal upon place and people, while the spirit of hospitality in its warmest degree makes the visitor feel as he turns homewards that life is assuredly worth living in this most favoured region of South Queensland.

From Warwick southwards, across the borders of New South Wales, the railway runs on to Armidale and thence to Sydney. My readers, who accompanied me on the journey northwards from that city, parted with Armidale in these sketches. We have now travelled over five thousand miles through the five colonies of Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, visiting most of the largest centres of population *en route*. We have also coasted along one thousand two hundred miles of the shores of the two latter countries. Our next trip is to the smallest of the colonies, Tasmania, which can only be reached by sea. Ships sail from both Sydney and Melbourne; from Sydney to Hobart, in the south of the island, and from Melbourne to Launceston, in the north. I went from Melbourne, and had the rare fortune of having, as fellow-passenger to both Tasmania and New Zealand, probably the most widely, and deservedly, popular man in the English-speaking world—mine, and everybody's, esteemed friend, Mark Twain.

On leaving Queensland, I can best say *au revoir* in the lines which Brunton Stephens, Queensland's national poet, addressed to "The Youngest of the Free," on an anniversary of the colony's admission to the rights of Home Rule:—

"No storied name we vaunt,  
Nor martial trophies raise;  
No battle-riven banners flaunt  
The triumphs of other days.  
But triumphs of peaceful days  
Adorn our jubilee:  
Here toil and skill Thine ends fulfil  
With hands that from blood are free.

## QUEENSLAND

"We pile the arms of Peace,  
Her trophies manifold,  
Her ploughshare swords, her shields of fleece,  
Her armour of bloodless gold.  
Our treasures of fleece and gold  
We consecrate to Thee,  
With choicest yield of fruit and field,  
And spoil from the forest tree.

"We bless Thee for our land,  
Broad streams and gladdening rills,  
For flocks that roam on ev'ry hand,  
For herds on a thousand hills,  
From all its thousand hills  
Our land doth call to Thee,  
Still do Thou bless with happiness  
This youngest of the free."

The marked independent spirit of Queenslanders is noted not only in the writings of her sons, but in the tone and temper of the people as a whole.

Queensland was born of the district of Moreton Bay, which in turn had, like the colony of which it first formed a part, a convict origin. But, before Moreton Bay merged into the Home-ruled Queensland of 1859, the undesirable pioneers had all been withdrawn back to Sydney. Therefore (as Queenslanders will carefully emphasize) "the Queen of the Colonies," as they proudly name their country, sprang into self-governing dignity at one bound, without any interval of rule by an Imperial official and his unrepresentative council of advisers. Whether it be due to these facts, or to some other cause, you certainly do find in this colony a stronger and more distinctive national sentiment than in any of the others. By this I do not mean that they are less friendly towards the Imperial connection. All the colonies seem equally desirous of maintaining the link of attachment, while it binds them, as it now does, in the easiest of nominal ties. But Queensland would, I think, brook interference with her own conception of her liberties less than any of the Australian family of young nations. This she has once or twice shown in prompt and effective protests against certain persons who had been selected for her governors by the Colonial Office.





PART VII.  
TASMANIA

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CHAPTER LVI.

FROM MELBOURNE TO TASMANIA

THE voyage from Melbourne to Launceston occupies a night and portion of a day, being a distance of some two hundred and seventy miles, though a line from shore to shore of the two colonies measures only one hundred and eighty at the narrowest points of Bass's Straits. Fifty miles of the trip represent the winding waters of the lovely Tamar river, up which you have to go to reach the northern capital of the smallest of the Australian colonies.

The journey takes up the greater portion of a day owing to the innumerable twists and sinuosities of the beautiful river. The voyage can only be made with safety in the daytime. This is fortunate in every respect, as it ensures to the traveller the uninterrupted view of all the enjoyable scenery on the way. It is like a trip into fairyland. The shores all the way are wooded down to the water's edge. Every few miles the river opens out into a wider expanse of water, and you sail into a seeming land-locked lake with no visible opening ahead of the steamer. Suddenly an outlet appears to the right or left again, and the vessel rides into another tree-lined channel, when new and if possible more charming vistas of water and timbered banks, with here and there a cosy cottage perched on some point overhanging the stream, breaks upon the eye, and so you glide along with constant scenic surprises until you reach Launceston.

The city is prettily situated between two wooded hills, extend-

ing up the sides of both. When first seen from the east bend of the Tamar it reminds you in its general appearance of some picturesque Swiss town. Seen from whatever point you can obtain a full view of it, you are impressed with its combined brightness, neatness, and cleanliness. Its prominent edifices stand well out in the general plan of the city, with their whitish stone and tasteful adornment and finish, and give the visitor a most agreeable impression of the industrial centres of Tasmania. Brisbane Street, St. John Street, and Prince's Square are the leading thoroughfares, and each possess some very fine public buildings; the Post Office being after an Italian model, and the Town Hall of an equally pleasing style. Churches and banks are also well up to the Australian high standard of the builders' art in sacred and profane institutions. The city has a very commodious Mechanics' Institute, with a free reading-room and a library of over 20,000 volumes. In clubs, societies, associations, and in institutions of a religious, charitable, literary, social, and athletic character the reputation of Launceston is very high. There is a bewildering number of these set forth in the local directory, and this probably explains the decidedly favourable estimate which the citizens form of their own culture, commercial standing, and political importance as compared with the opinions they hold and express upon Hobart and its people.

Launceston, in fact, holds its head very high when instructing a friendly stranger how to differentiate between a city with brains and capacity and an accidentally selected capital. You are soon reminded by Launcestonians that Melbourne is the daughter of the little city by the turbulent South Esk, as Victoria's capital was founded by the adventurous Batman and other exploring Tasmanians. This historic fact causes your Launceston politician, pressman, lawyer, dock labourer, or newsboy to speak of Hobart, the capital of the colony, in the most patronizing manner, and to predict with the confidence of a prophet the advent of the day when the seat of government will be transferred from the banks of the delightful Derwent to those of the tranquil Tamar. The people you see in the streets are well-dressed, appear prosperous, and sustain in every way the good impression made upon you by the physique and intelligence of the average continental Australian.

The citizens of Launceston have, as already mentioned, a very small opinion of Hobart, the seat of Tasmanian government. This feeling is not the cause of commercial rivalry alone. Its genesis is probably found in the conflict which arose between

them and the government some twenty-five years ago over a branch railway, built by a local company, and which turned out to be for the time a failure. In the contest which followed between the Executive and Launceston scenes occurred resembling those which often happened in Ireland when obnoxious raids were made by bailiffs and police for the recovery of debts due to the law, but very unpopular in their exactions by legal process. The authorities at Hobart demanded payment of some interest upon the public money advanced for the construction of the branch line, which the landowners and tenants of the districts concerned refused to pay. Distress warrants were issued wholesale for the seizure of goods and cattle. The people resisted the officers. Property thus taken was offered for sale at Launceston, but no one would bid for it. The law was in fact boycotted, and in the end the government had to give in by having an Act passed in the Legislature freeing the ratepayers of the excited localities from all obligations in connection with the building of the local line. Having once defeated the ruling power at Hobart, the sturdy Launcestians and their friends in the northern districts of the island colony have convinced themselves that they are more worthy to wield the influence of executive authority than the feebler hands of those of the south.

There is a very good country around Launceston, which explains its prosperous looks and increasing trade and commerce. It is the distributing centre for a large number of successful little townships scattered over a radius of fifty or sixty miles, possessing some of the best farming, wool growing, and fruit culture in Tasmania. Then the flourishing gold mines at Beaconsfield are only a dozen miles distant, while other industries in similar neighbouring localities add their quota to the growing prosperity of the northern capital.

Property is alone permitted to manage the municipal affairs of Launceston. It is not what a citizen is, but what he possesses in wealth, goods, or chattels, that has municipal or political recognition. Citizens' rights have no show whatever. To be a mayor, alderman, or auditor, in Launceston, you must be "seized" of real estate, or possessed of property that has a value of £500, or be assessed for something with an annual value of £50. Cash counts for everything so far as municipal honours go.

It is the same with rural municipalities and police districts in the colony, with the additional antediluvian regulation of multiple property voting. The franchise for one of these small bodies is regulated on a strictly money basis. Electors are taken

from the assessment roll at the rate of one vote for £30 or under; £30 to £80, two; £80 to £160, three; and so on up to the fortunate figure of £460, which commands seven votes. Women, that is the property belonging thereto, can vote on the same cash terms, not otherwise. The city has an annual valuation of about £130,000, and claims a population of twenty thousand.

The pride and glory of Launceston is its "Cataract Gorge," up the side of which the citizens at their own cost have made one of the most picturesque walks to be found in the whole of Australasia. The gorge is a cleft about one hundred yards wide, in a high and solid volcanic rock, and running a mile deep into a hill rising above the town. The South Esk rushes down this gorge at a tremendous speed, dashing over innumerable boulders on its way, leaping and foaming along as if driven by thousands of water spirits eager to share in the placid repose of the Tamar, into which the roaring mountain river races at headlong speed, takes a "header," and disappears. Everything that good taste in shrub planting, planning of romantic bowers, and arboreal ornamentation could suggest, has been done to make this ravine a delightful place of public resort. Some of the best views of the town below are obtained as you ascend the banks of the galloping torrent, and the whole outlook is one on which the eye of the visitor loves to linger in the enjoyment of what Nature and art combined have done to create an ideal place for a city's promenade.

## CHAPTER LVII.

### THE JOHN MITCHEL "LEGEND"

LAUNCESTON would have its name changed to "John Mitchelton," if its Irish inhabitants could have their way in such a matter. A Mitchel "legend" is warmly cherished by my fellow-countrymen, who are largely numbered among its citizens. There are Englishmen and Scotchmen also who entertain a warm feeling of generous appreciation of the Young Ireland prisoners who were domiciled for a time in Tasmania. I had the good fortune to meet and converse with a few of the intrepid spirits who enabled Mitchel to make his escape. Archdeacon Hogan, who gave the illustrious fugitive his clerical garb in which to disguise himself, honoured me with his presence on the platform at my lecture. I had the additional pleasure of meeting himself and Mr. Dan Burke (now M.P. and J.P.) at the hospitable fireside of the Catholic Deanery, and heard from the lips of the latter gentleman the story of how he and his brother, and one or two other devoted friends, fought against wind and weather, privations, and police surveillance during the several attempts made to board a friendly vessel near the mouth of the Tamar, on the memorable dark nights so graphically described in the *Jail Journal*. More true-hearted or more self-sacrificing "friends in need" no man in want of such at a supreme crisis in life could ever find than those exiled Irish peasants proved themselves to be to John Mitchel. Those of them who survive glory in the part they took in the historic event. And, as already mentioned, even the sons of those English settlers who aided and abetted the rescue of the prisoner, talk proudly of what their fathers did to help the accomplishment of the widely-known purpose of "Nicaragua" Smythe.

Attempts have been made by English writers, and I regret by Marcus Clarke and some other Australian critics, to call Mitchel's sense of honour in question for having effected his escape while at conditional liberty on parole. The English judgment upon



the matter can scarcely be deemed free from prejudice. Anything done by a political enemy of England's cannot, in the nature of things Anglo-Saxon, be in accord with the code which decrees that

"It's you're the sinner ollers, she's the saint ;  
Wot's good's all English, all that isn't, ain't !"

To offend against the name and authority of England's paternal law is to place yourself beyond the pale of both honesty and honour. One cannot wonder, therefore, at the shock which was given to the delicate sense of England's offended virtue when such an Irish rebel as John Mitchel succeeded in liberating himself from a brutal sentence and the criminal status of a ticket-of-leave man.

It is not to be overlooked in discussing this alleged breach of parole that a special law was passed by the English Parliament to brand John Mitchel as a "felon." Sir Robert Peel's Treason-Felony Act came into existence in 1848 expressly for the purpose of placing this stigma upon every political opponent of English rule in Ireland who should attempt in any "illegal" way to win that liberty for his country which Englishmen advocated in all ways for struggling nationalities not subject to their own rule. This fact alone, and apart from every other consideration, would justify Mitchel's action. A power which deliberately legislates with the purpose of degrading a political foe, is not entitled to be treated in accordance with a code of honour which itself expressly intends to violate. If a robber "held you up" with his pistol and proceeded to rifle you of watch and purse on *his* stipulated condition that you were not to defend yourself against him, you could scarcely be charged, in reason, with a breach of "an honourable understanding" if you took him at an advantage, when off guard, and retrieved the situation.

But this is putting Mitchel's action in making good his escape from Tasmania in its worst light. The case made out by the actual facts completely exonerates him from the charge of having gone back upon his word. The simple facts are these: When the question of escape was first considered Smith O'Brien, whose high sense of honour has never been questioned, declared that the parole would have to be discharged by a formal withdrawal of it, in person, before the magistrate of the police district, and within proper business hours too; and to this rigid rule Mitchel religiously, or rather recklessly, adhered. Smith O'Brien's refusal to be the party to be rescued by Mr. P. J. Smythe

was not due to any objection on his part to the morality of the plan. That is another malicious fiction. It was from a chivalrous feeling that, as he had already attempted and failed to get away from Maria Island, it was Mitchel's turn next; and he resolutely refused to avail himself of the facilities embodied in the new scheme of rescue. The attempt that has been made to place O'Brien's attitude in judgment against Mitchel's action was therefore most unfair.

The withdrawing of Mitchel's parole was done in the most open manner possible, and within the vicinity of at least ten armed police. It is true some of these had been bribed by Smythe, but what was there, under all the circumstances, wrong or censurable in that? Surely if ever the unwritten code of *à la guerre comme la guerre* is justifiable in operation, it is in the instance of a political prisoner whose condemnation and sentence are the work of open and deliberately packed juries, as was the case on Mitchel's trial. But this is not pleaded as an extenuation. The obligation of honour was amply satisfied otherwise. There were still three or four to one of the unbribed officers within call of the magistrate when Mitchel and Smythe entered his room, and the former's undertaking not to attempt escape while on parole was by speech and letter clearly unsaid, and everything due to personal honour discharged in the act. A determined magistrate could have had both the intruders before him arrested or shot within two minutes. Fortune rather than favour told for the success of the plot. Mr. Davis's irresolution enabled Mitchel and his companion to clear out of Bothwell before any effective attempt was made to utilise the police, who were but a hundred yards or so from the magistrate's office all the time. On the face of them the chances of successful escape were more or less desperate from the outset. The element of danger was never absent for a moment from the enterprise, from the time the two friends "interviewed" Mr. Davis until they had placed a few miles of road and bush between them and those into whose hands the law-made "felon" had returned England's ticket-of-leave. These are the plain facts of the case, and it only needs to be asked, what would be said in England if, say, an English political prisoner in, say, Russia or France had effected an escape in a similar way, to give to Mitchel's action on that memorable day in Bothwell, Tasmania, the stamp and character of a courageous and thoroughly honourable proceeding.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

### HOBART

FROM Launceston to Hobart, a distance of 120 miles, you pass through a naturally rich and, to the eye, an agreeable-looking country. There is comparatively little cultivation met with, owing, presumably, to the sparse population and the amount of rich land used for sheep ranches. Several good rivers are crossed on the way south, and other evidences of nature's liberality towards this favoured island are met with during the journey. Timber is to be seen everywhere on the plains and up the sides of mountains, but offering comparatively little impediment to the creation of good tillage farms.

The names of the railway stations on the route are disappointing. By their English and Scottish complexion they show how parochial and narrow the British builders of the line or rulers of the country permitted themselves to be in their notions of nomenclature. In fact, all Tasmania may be said to be under the sway of imported names. Mountains, rivers, and lakes, like the towns, counties, and railway stations, are dubbed in the most provincial spirit. In one sense this appears reasonable enough. It is a purely human prejudice. To carry with you to the end of the earth those names which are most associated with one's native land must always be a strong racial inclination. But a line should be drawn somewhere to the limit of appropriation. Settlers from Great Britain took the land of Tasmania from the natives and exterminated—in the orthodox manner—the whole race of original proprietors. Not content with this most exhaustive conquest, they proceeded to bring the rivers and mountains under the dominion of the English dictionary. There is not, I believe, a single mountain or river in the island now known by a native or aboriginal name. Allowing for all that can be said in defence of this practice, I hold it would have been more in accordance with good taste and decent

geography to have retained, at least for the rivers and mountains, the native names. This has been largely done in New Zealand, where pro-British sentiment is quite as strong as in Tasmania. A few of the colony's small villages are baptized in the Tasmanian tongue, and it makes one regret, on hearing how sweet the names sound, that the practice was not more generally applied. "Karooa," "Nubeena," "Warata," "Truganine," "Tongataboo," and "Ringarooma" are surely more appropriate, as they are certainly more musical, than "Margate," "Sheffield," "Hagley" and the innumerable other too familiar reminders of the smoke and smell, and rags and mendicancy of the old countries.

There are very few cities in the world that can rival Hobart in the romantic beauty of its situation. Other sites may more than compare with that on which Tasmania's capital stands in some exceptional scenic attribute, but in all-round landscape loveliness, in the variety of bewitching natural features with which it is enriched, it is equalled by few and surpassed by none. Seen from the Derwent, as your ship glides out of Storm Bay into that most captivating of lake-like rivers, or viewed reversely from the wooded sides of one of the handsomest mountains in the world, rising immediately behind the town, the vision is inimitably beautiful. It is a scene upon which the gaze could scarcely ever tire to linger, as it can rest nowhere except on some aspect which gives enjoyment to the enraptured eye.

Looked at from the estuary of the Derwent you have the glorious background formed by Mount Wellington, with its wooded, verdant slopes and graceful contour capped by a towering mass of fluted rock—a fitting coronal to four thousand feet of majestic mountain grandeur. The little capital spreads itself out over a series of knolls which lie at the feet of the tree-clad giant, and extends to the right and left and down to the shores of the harbour, displaying numbers of substantial residences, gardens, orchards, parks, and promenades in one general view of city and suburbs. But to see and enjoy all that the site of Hobart (or Sullivan's Cove) can offer to the lover of the beautiful in landscape scenery you must drive or walk from the city along the Huan Road, which climbs about two thousand feet up the side of Mount Wellington, winding in and out of glens and gullies, passing babbling mountain streams and cascades, with trees and shrubs, ferns and flowers to the right and left in bewildering profusion. The glimpses of Hobart



and of the Derwent that break upon the view as you climb the steep road must be seen to be admired as they deserve. No description in words could do the barest justice to them. The picture between you and the horizon fairly takes your breath away. The sea running into Storm Bay, the bay losing itself in the calmer waters of the Derwent, and that river winding in and out of the timbered shores. Hills and valleys clothed in pine and gum trees extend beyond the river as far as the eye can see, to the east and south, mantled in a soft purplish haze, while Tasman's Peninsula looks more like some region of fairyland than that of a place recalling the dark and shameful memories of Port Arthur. Around you, as you gaze down upon this fascinating panorama, there are giant Huan pines uprearing their stately forms and foliage over a hundred feet; blue gums and other forest trees, climbing up the sides of the mountain, while the whitethorn peeps out from many leafy glades to carry your mind for a moment some sixteen thousand miles away from all this profusion of Tasmanian scenic glories.

Hobart obtains a copious supply of excellent water from the springs and cascades of Mount Wellington. Architecturally the city is not as yet in harmony with its splendid site. Possibly when a colony of 160,000 people grows in proportion to its resources it will build itself a capital more in keeping with what nature has bounteously done for it in "Sullivan's Cove."

Notwithstanding the great advantage it has in the depth and capacity of its harbour—deep enough for the largest steamers to berth themselves alongside of the wharves—Hobart has not the business activity or "go" of its northern rival, Launceston. This is due, in the opinion of Free Traders, to the rejection of proposals made early in the Sixties by a patriotic minister to make the city a free port, and thereby entice trade and commerce to call that way in the business intercourse between Europe and New Zealand and other countries. The land and property owners refused to pay the small extra taxation which the scheme would involve, and the chance which Hobart would have had in its adoption passed away. It has a decidedly sleepy air, and is now seldom roused out of a congenial lethargy even by the legislative labours of its Parliament. Macquarie Street may be said to be the capital's main thoroughfare. It can boast of a few attractive buildings, but with the exception of the Town Hall they are not conspicuous for style or finish. The governor's residence, which lies a mile from the city and commands an unrivalled prospect of the surrounding landscape,



is after the manner of old English mansions, and is the finest structure in Hobart. The Church of England and Roman Catholic Cathedrals are solidly built, but of no striking character or appearance. One must, however, again plead the extenuating fact that, with less people in the whole of Tasmania than half the present population of Belfast, it would be very unreasonable to expect a comparison in streets or structures with populous and wealthy centres in other lands.

Hobart, like Launceston, is very creditably equipped with social, literary, athletic, and other clubs, while in benevolent and industrial institutions, asylums, and societies, religious and charitable, there is evidence of a desire to keep pace with the progress of the big centres of civilization. In fact, many a European city with quadruple its population cannot present as many evidences of enlightened advancement. It looks also a very bright and clean city, a feature due, doubtless, to the same causes which give a similar appearance to Launceston—a whitish sandstone in almost all the buildings, and a boundless supply of water. If Hobart only shares, as I expect it does, in the general salubrity of its colony's climate, it must be as healthy to live in as it is clean to look at. Its attractions for holiday seekers from warmer colonies is one of Hobart's fortunate qualities. Large numbers of visitors go there from the mainland countries in their warm seasons owing to the cool temperature of Tasmania and the wide reputation of its varied attractiveness. Hobart women are also counted very handsome, while the city's hospitality is a conspicuous part of its all-round captivating character.

Politics are now seldom exciting in the island colony. It has fallen on peaceful days. It has not attempted to follow its progressive neighbours in their search for legislative remedies for such ills or evils as men complain of in most countries. Property still rules everything in Tasmania almost in its own way, and is likely to continue to do so until a larger population than one hundred and sixty thousand makes a democratic voice heard in its Parliament.

The Legislature consists of a Legislative Council of eighteen elected members, and a Legislative Assembly of thirty-eight. The members of the Upper Chamber serve for six years. They must be thirty years of age or over, "natural born" or naturalized subjects, or must have obtained "letters of denization."

The franchise for the Council is a property one. Electors

must be "natural born" or naturalized, and have the following qualifications:—Freehold estate of £20 per annum, or a leasehold of £80. There are also the following "learned" franchises:—Degree of any university within British dominions; an associate of arts, Tasmania; a barrister or solicitor on the roll of the colony; legally qualified medical practitioner, officiating minister of religion; officer, or retired ditto, of army or navy not on actual service, or officer of Tasmanian volunteer force.

The voters for members of the Assembly are qualified as follows:—Must be "natural born" or naturalized; owner or occupier of property of any value as shown by assessment roll; income, salary, or wages of £60 a year, with the proviso that £30 of this income "must be received during the last six months before the claim for a vote is sent in." The electoral districts are about equally divided between "northern and southern" divisions of the island; Hobart having nine members in both Chambers and Launceston six. Members of the Assembly receive £50 a year only for expenses, with railway travelling free for the whole colony.

There are no definite political parties in Tasmanian politics. The burning questions are mainly fiscal and that of who should hold office. Groups are formed and called after their leaders. The present ministry is that of Sir Edward Braddon, a brother to Miss Braddon, the novelist. Efforts are being made to create a Liberal and Labour Party, but they are making slow progress. The majority of the voters are landholders and farmers, and naturally conservative in their ideas. The miners are the main hope for such a party, but they are very much scattered over the island and difficult to organize. Farmers who pay rent are also inclined to be progressive, but they are not nearly as numerous as the farming proprietors of holdings.

The mortgage-holders, landowners, and woolgrowers "run" the colony, and are responsible for its very backward development. Tasmania is, of course, protectionist. Its rulers seem to dread the advent of more progressive ideas which would tend to open up the beautiful and naturally rich island to free trade and a larger population, and might therefore result in the loss of political power.

There is a Trades and Labour Council in Hobart organized on similar lines to those of kindred bodies in the other colonies. Beyond participating in the movement which is general in Australia,

for obtaining the eight hours limit to daily labour, the organized workers of Tasmania have not, as yet, gone in for "advanced" programmes of industrial or social reform. I was told that the working men of Hobart were peculiarly apathetic on the subject of Labour organization. They are reputed to be of a subdued disposition, owing, it is said, to hereditary causes associated with the early history of the colony. I am inclined to doubt the soundness of this apology for Tasmanian backwardness in support of what is now practically a universal forward Labour agitation. The causes referred to have generally produced the very opposite qualities in the offspring of conquering colonizers. The British and Irish descendants of those who won the battle of Hastings (people with whom Emerson would not compare the forbears of the working men of Hobart) are to-day ruling a great portion of this earth of ours, and one fails to see why the children of classes less successfully criminal than the Norman hordes should lack the qualities of courage and combination needed in a trade or political organization in Tasmania. But, be the explanation what it may, it appears that the Labour societies of the island colony have been unable, so far, to make themselves a power in politics or to return a single Labour representative to the Tasmanian Assembly.

## CHAPTER LIX.

### REVENUE AND TAXATION

THE population of the colony, as estimated in 1894, was 157,457. This gives six persons to the square mile, as the area of the island is 26,215 square miles, or 16,778,000 acres. It is about one-fifth smaller in area than Ireland.

The revenue per head of population was £4 9s. 4d. in 1894, and the taxation £2 13s. 9d., with customs and excise of £1 18s. 4d. added. A land tax of one halfpenny in the £ on the capital value of land is levied. The Legislature has power to add to this tax, but as it is mainly in the hands or under the influence of the land corporations and sheep squatters, there is little likelihood of any increase being made beyond the additional halfpenny imposed in 1895. The income tax of the colony amounts to about 8d. in the £. Incomes under £150 are exempt. Probate duty is levied at the rate of two per cent. on personal estate, from one to five hundred pounds, and three per cent. from that figure upwards.

The cost of government amounts to about £5 per head, but this rather large sum for so small a population includes the working expenses of the state railway and telegraph departments. The public debt per head stands at the astounding figure of £49! With respect, however, to the comparative largeness of this national debt, it is urged by Tasmanians that the money was borrowed mainly to build the state railways, which have worked satisfactorily. The cost of transit has been lowered, it is said, two-thirds on what obtained formerly, and all interests in the country have, therefore, benefited through increased and cheaper facilities for the carriage of goods and produce. It is claimed, also, that the assets represented in the ownership of the railways of the country by the state are a satisfactory set-off to the debt incurred mainly in their construction.

There are about three acres per head of population under cultivation. There are sixty-five sheep to every square mile, and only six human beings. If these figures were only reversed the prosperity and prospects of Tasmania would have a far different value in the government statistical reports. Sheep ranching and land corporations have the country to themselves, and the handful of people who are supposed, in a national sense, to "own the country," are but the paid servants of these interests, and are each in debt, in the same sense, to the extent of £50 to English money-lenders—for the good of the sheep and land-owning interests of Tasmania.

Popular education in the island is compulsory and non-sectarian. Denominational schools receive no support whatever from the state. State schools are, in a sense, a misnomer, as those so designated derive half their revenues from school pence. The fees paid by pupils averaged £1 3s. 1d. in 1893. The children of poor widows or of destitute parents are exempt from fees. "Moderately poor" parents can get their children taught for (not less than) threepence per week. Clergymen or other authorized teachers are permitted to give religious instruction in state schools, at specified times, to such children as belong to their particular creed. In Tasmania, as in almost all the other Australian colonies (I think New South Wales and Victoria are strange exceptions), children living a distance from the nearest school can obtain free passes there and back on the state railway. This is one among the many great advantages to the general community of the state ownership of railways.

State schools are under the general management of "Boards of Advice" of not more than seven members. These Boards report half-yearly to the Minister of Education, and are responsible for the expenditure of the Parliamentary grant. In 1893 there were 253 state schools in the island, with 20,475 children on the rolls. The total expenditure of public money for the education of these children for that year was £37,000.

The Catholics of Tasmania, who number one-sixth of the population, do not send their children to the state schools. They support their own, without any assistance whatever from Parliament. These schools are admirably conducted, and more than keep pace in educational results with the public schools.

The gold-mining industry of Tasmania has been overshadowed during the past few years by the big boom in Westralia, and very little attention has been given in Great Britain to the wide field




for investment which lies open in the varied and valuable mineral resources of this richly-endowed island. Over 50,000 ounces of gold were got in its mines in 1894. Gold mining has been going on there for over thirty years. The richest mines are situated at Beaconsfield, on the west bank of the lovely river Tamar. Over 360,000 ounces have been yielded by this district alone since the precious ore was first discovered there. The leading mine of Beaconsfield, the "Tasmania," a quartz-reef mine, has produced more than ten tons of gold, and paid over half a million in dividends.

Deep sinking has revealed good stone in the Lefroy gold-field, on the east bank of the Tamar, and a place which was virtually abandoned as an alluvial field some years back has now a better prospect than ever from its profitable quartz mining. There are a dozen other gold-mining centres where new machinery and renewed enterprise are increasing the colony's general output of gold. This "tight little island" has produced, up to the present, no less than £3,000,000 worth of gold, £600,000 of silver, £6,000,000 of tin, and £500,000 worth of coal; while copper, lead, and iron are also found in various parts of the country.

In a paper read before the Chamber of Commerce at Hobart, in October, 1895, Mr. Belstead, the Secretary of Mines, repeated the following statements made by a competent authority:—"The colony is bountifully endowed with great variety and abundance of mineral wealth, with stores of gold, tin, silver, copper, lead, iron, and coal; plentiful supplies of water, excellent timber, a splendid temperate climate, and great natural advantages as a receiving and distributing centre. There are unusually good facilities for the growth and establishment of metallurgical and manufacturing industries; and with the removal of fiscal barriers to the interchange of products among the colonies these natural advantages must in the end make her take a leading part not only as a producer of raw material, but also as a maker of finished products."

From what I saw and learned during my all too brief stay in Tasmania, I came away with a similar belief in the natural riches and future prosperity of that delightful country, conditional, however, as to the future upon the development of yet another asset in Tasmanian wealth, not enumerated in Mr. Belstead's inventory of resources. With less people in the whole colony than is in a third-rate English town, it will never be possible to develop the resources which require the industry of a nation—not



a parish—to develop. There is work for a million of hands in the soil, mines, woods, rivers, and seas of the country, and the latent wealth of these resources can never be delved out until the proper steps are taken to throw the millions of acres of idle land in the colony open on the freest terms to the labour not only of Tasmania, but of other countries having too many people for their soil.

Both in Hobart and in Launceston provision has occasionally to be made to feed the hungry and clothe the naked in a land where there are at least 1000 acres of rich soil to every man, woman, and child of the population. The destitute are only few in number, it is true, but so are the people. The difference is in degree, not in the nature or cause of this anomaly of poverty, in the midst of gold mines and of millions of acres of soil that will grow everything, from a carrot to a grape. Having grabbed the best-situated and richest land in the island for squatting or prospective-value purposes, the corporations and monopolists, through their government, offer the worst lands on terms which do not promise too much encouragement to settlers. Under the Act 54 Vict. No. 8, called the Crown Lands Act, persons desirous of selecting land can do so up to 320 acres, at £1 per acre, payable in instalments.

The price appears to be at the rate of one figure for all kinds of land, and fourteen years is fixed as the period of repayment. With so small a population, there can of course be only a relative percentage inclined to agricultural industry, but in the event of an increase in the coming years the plan of offering Crown leases for long terms at low rents, which works so well in New Zealand, should be substituted for the alienation system which now obtains in Tasmania. Possibly, in view of the added value which growth of population would give to the land now in the hands of the monopolists, they might see the wisdom of ordering Parliament to amend the Crown Lands Act in the directions suggested, and regulate the rents of settlers on the basis of their own land tax of one penny per £ of capital value. The extent of land alienated in the colony up to 1895 (Coghlan's *Seven Colonies of Australasia*) was under 5,000,000 acres, leaving almost 12,000,000 still in the hands of the Crown as state property.

Tasmania has been likened by Australian health-seekers to the Riviera for its delightful climate. In this respect it is far more favoured than any of its sister colonies, with the possible exception of New Zealand. The mean temperature of the island is about

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fifty-five degrees. The heat seldom registers higher than ninety in summer or lower than twenty in winter. Unlike the mainland of Australia, it is blessed with an abundant rainfall, which largely accounts for its comparative richness of verdure and greater and more varied arboreal growth.

## CHAPTER LX.

### "VAN DIEMEN'S LAND"

**A**UTHORITIES are not in agreement as to the country from whence the (now exterminated) natives of Tasmania arrived in the island. The most acceptable theory is that it was peopled from the larger country across Bass's Straits; the distance being shorter than to any other likely place of immigration. This is not by any means conclusive evidence, though there is the additional testimony of similar colour, head-formation, and habits in favour of a common racial bond between the blacks of both countries. Attempts have been made to trace the now extinct race to the African negroes, while it has also been held that they may have come originally from Hindostan. All this, however, is mere conjecture. Wherever they came from there are none of them left. They have been literally "wiped out" by that Anglo-Saxon genius for "civilization" which is one of its conquering weaknesses. Stories galore are told, of course, about fiendish murders by the blacks, mutilations, outrages, and nameless horrors perpetrated upon the innocent whites, whose only mission was to Christianize and reclaim their coloured brethren of "Van Diemen's Land."

It is the same old story that has been told of every country which the white man coveted and of every native race that has attempted to arrest its conquest and destruction at the hands of European settlers. Humanity unappreciated on the one hand; untamable, savage ferocity on the other. This exceptional Christian virtue of the settlers in Tasmania having become exhausted, about the year 1828 an exterminating ordinance was issued by the despotic governor Arthur. The measure was most successful. The whole of the aborigines were either shot down like wild animals (convicts having been let loose from prisons to join in the chase), or captured and shipped off to the rocks of Flinders Island, where starvation finished what Christian bullets had left unsettled. Tasmania was swept

clean of its unappreciative natives, and the triumph of European colonization and humanity was complete. Not a single human being of the original race has been left alive to vex by his presence or colour the civilizing conscience of the benevolent colonists.

There are many facts and circumstances, natural and otherwise, connected with Tasmania which make a visit to "the garden colony" one of keen interest to a roaming Irishman. The site of Hobart was originally known as "Sullivan's Cove." Launceston, the rival capital, got its first and present supply of water from a stream called "St. Patrick's river." The first payable gold mines in the colony were those of "Fingal," while the first find of Tasmanian coal was likewise associated with this classic Celtic name. Someone has called Tasmania "the Ireland of the antipodes," and the comparison is not inappropriate. Both islands are nearly the same in size, and not very unlike in physical formation. Both are blessed with a genial and health-giving climate, and can each boast, with equal pride, of the most beautiful, if not the largest, rivers of any lands where waters run; while both are, again, equally renowned for the quality and reputation of—the potato. But there is something more, a more interesting relationship still.

There has been a kind of political connection—the sad and tragic story of the transportation days—which made a visit to "Van Diemen's Land" of intense interest to my mind. Often have I heard my father tell of the batches of men whom his father had seen sentenced to life or to twenty years for connection with the after-movements of the '98 rebellion and, especially, with the agrarian and anti-tithe secret societies, which alone enabled the peasantry of Connaught to fight against ruthless oppression seventy or eighty years ago. I recollect, too, how, in the love songs that were sung in my childhood, "Van Diemen's Land" and "transportation" would mingle with "England's cruel laws" in some story that would tell of young hearts sundered through "judges' tyranny" and the cause of "Erin's liberty." Thousands of such "criminals" and of their predecessors of the '98 period must have found their way to the prison hells of Macquarie Harbour and Port Arthur, as well as to Port Jackson and Norfolk Island. History has been doubly unkind to these soldiers of liberty. Only a few among the prominent '98 rebels who were transported have had their names and memories handed down for the veneration of their countrymen of after times. The transported thousands,



like the thousands who were slaughtered in the rebellion and after, are simply added to the countless numbers of the nameless brave who sacrifice identity as well as life in the fight for liberty in every land, and pass into the fameless Valhalla of the unknown.

I confess to having found more of my reverence going out to the memory of the forgotten "Ninety-eight men" who lie buried in unmarked Australian graves than to that of the well-remembered "Forty-eight men" who lived to find honour and national funeral demonstrations in Ireland. Then there was absolutely no comparison between the punishment meted out to the manacled and mercilessly-treated pikemen, of the formidable insurrection, and the comparative leniency and freedom accorded to the revolutionary penmen of what John Mitchel truly called "that most rueful and pitiful rebellion." England gauged to a nicety the relative danger to herself of the two movements, and meted out her legal vengeance accordingly. We see the men of the latter "sitting placid under a honeysuckle tree, basking in the balmy air," as John Mitchel writes of himself at Bothwell, while we must go to the pages of Marcus Clarke's book to learn what tortures and indignities had to be endured by the men who made the power of alien government reel in Ireland a hundred years ago.

Most certainly, the Forty-eight prisoners had the good fortune to fall on a clement set of English judges and jailers. Had they lived earlier, or later, in a revolutionary sense, there would have been less pleasant stories to record in brilliantly-written *Jail Journals*. With recollections of Millbank and Dartmoor in my mind, during my stay in Tasmania, I could not help being a little envious of my immediate and more fortunate political forbears of the Irish movement. Possibly the explanation of England's tenderness towards the Young Ireland rebels arose from the conviction, shared by John Mitchel, that it was indeed "a rueful and pitiful rebellion," and had to England the inherent harmlessness of a mere newspaper and rhetorical warfare. We had some, far too much, newspaper conspiracy in the Fenian movement; just enough to destroy it; but the essential difference between the two movements was, that whereas they were all leaders, with practically no organized followers in the first, there were organization, numbers, and a menacing power, but no leaders, in the later attack upon Castle rule in Ireland. Hence, doubtless, the scaling of England's legal retaliation in measuring the penalties earned of her law in Ireland in '48 and '67, respectively.

John Mitchel speaks of some Irish convicts who were in his employment at one time in Bothwell, as follows: "Two or three horrible convict cut-throats, all from Ireland—and all, by their own account, transported for *seizing arms*. This is considered, among these fellows, as a respectable sort of offence." And he then calmly proceeds to say: "It is a remarkable fact that in nearly three years, during which time I have been in Van Diemen's Land, living for most part in a lonely cottage, with windows all round close to the ground, with two or more prisoner-servants round the place, my family have felt as secure, and slept as peaceably, as ever they did in Bambridge! . . . Many a time as I look upon these quiet, well-behaved men reaping not too arduously, singing or smoking in the fields like human husbandmen and simple Arcadian shepherds, instead of rejoicing at *their* improved condition and behaviour, I gaze on them with horror as unclean and inhuman monsters, due long time ago to the gallows-tree and oblivion: and then the very sunlight in this most radiant land takes a livid hue to my eyes! the waving, whispering woods put on a brown horror," etc., etc., and all because the aforesaid Irish convicts (who, for aught Mitchel knew to the contrary, may have had homes to defend against a merciless oppression) were allowed to breathe the same air as a political prisoner! But he passes sentence unconsciously upon this unjust spirit of his when recounting the services rendered to himself, when in danger subsequently, by even an English convict, where he says: "I wrote a letter to my wife to tell her which way I had taken, and without the least hesitation entrusted it to Job Simms, who was to go over to Bothwell next day with some cattle to Mr. Russell, and who undertook to deliver the note personally at Nant. This man is an Englishman, and has been an old prisoner: yet I know that he would not sell the note to the enemy for a thousand pounds!" Noble testimony indeed to the honour, loyalty, and honesty of a "horrid cut-throat of a convict"—qualities which must have surely resided in Job Simms' nature somewhere before he sinned against that class-made law which has, in its time and accursed operations, turned hundreds of thousands of men, Irish and English, from the paths of honesty to those of crime.

I had read the *Jail Journal* years before from the purely Irish and literary point of view, but not from the broad humanitarian standpoint. I discovered its appalling narrowness of spirit and lamentable want of fairness towards friends as well as foes, while

reading it again in Tasmania. No one could admire more than I did Mitchel's splendid hatred of alien domination in Ireland—measureless, unquenchable, and almost epic in its scope and depth and intensity. No one before or after him has cursed the cause of Ireland's miseries with such merciless and brilliant ferocity, and it is this quality of anathematizing the power which keeps Ireland down that has given Mitchel such a hold upon the Nationalists who revived the rebellious spirit in the country again after his time. All this and more will remain to his credit as long as Irishmen live to read his classic and impassioned assaults upon the arch enemy of their country. But the unworthy gibes at Gavan Duffy, the calling of Louis Kossuth "an impostor," the groundless accusations against Balfe, a fellow Forty-eight man, of being an English informer; and, above all, the injustice and harshness of his sentiments and feelings as expressed in his book towards the unfortunates who had sinned against the rights of that property which he had himself so eloquently denounced—after reading all this in the land in which Hobart, Port Arthur, and Macquarie Harbour prisons had existed, I almost regretted having opened the *Jail Journal* again.



PART VIII.  
NEW ZEALAND

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CHAPTER LXI.

A VOYAGE WITH MARK TWAIN

WHO could think of *mal de mer* with Mark Twain as a fellow passenger? It was my luck to be thus favoured on board the *Mararoa*, bound from Melbourne to New Zealand, *viâ* Hobart. I had the pleasure of meeting the great humourist in Sydney, and of listening to one of the wittiest and best all-round after-dinner speeches which ever mitigated the dyspeptic penalty of a public banquet. The hospitable Athenæum Club of that most hospitable city, honoured itself in according a princely greeting to one who has made the English-reading world his debtor for the priceless treasures of hearty laughter found in the pages of *The Innocents Abroad*, *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*, and his other works.

No celebrity can be more readily approached than Mark Twain. There is absolutely no "side" hitched on to *his* genius. The kindest of smiles and of laughing, good-natured grey eyes, make you immediately welcome. You are made to feel at once that you are in presence of a man whom fame or fortune could not deprive of his natural disposition to make you laugh away the worries and troubles of the moment. He was, needless to say, a favourite with everybody on board. All desired the honour of an introduction and of personal contact with, in a reading sense, so old a friend, and the opinion of everyone was that, in courtesy and in every other respect, the "Tramp Abroad" was, in Gilbertian terms, "Everything he ought to be, and nothing that he oughtn't to."



As the *Mararoa* glided down the enchanting lake-like Derwent, with all its lovely panorama of natural beauty inviting a longer stay at "Sullivan's Cove," Storm Bay and Tasman's Peninsula recalled the convict days of Port Arthur, and Marcus Clarke's *For the Term of His Natural Life* came up for discussion. Mark had read that truly great book, and had visited the asylum at Hobart that very morning, where there are a few score human remnants of the old convict period still living. It had been one of the most interesting but saddening experiences of his life. These poor wretches are very well cared for now, but he was convinced, from what he had seen and heard, that Clarke's work told the truth about the fiendish cruelties which had been inflicted on the prisoners. The faces, crippled forms, and "scored" backs of these old men—the furrows made in their backs by the floggings—were proofs enough for him. The officials try to influence visitors by asserting that Clarke's stories are founded upon exaggerated facts, and that excessive floggings were not resorted to. Convicts in those days were of the worst and most desperate character, and made a stern discipline a matter of prison necessity; but no such cruelties as those so graphically related in the great realistic novel were ever perpetrated by English officers, etc., etc. All this transparent gloss appears to have been spoken in vain to so experienced a judge of human nature as Mark Twain. He grew indignant at the thought of doctors having looked on and sanctioned the savage punishments which could leave such evidence of their force and ferocity after so many years on the bent backs of the human wrecks at the asylum in Hobart.

He judged Clarke's work to be a truly great book, and expressed the opinion that the author was the foremost Australian writer and the herald of a literature which was growing and expanding every day, and was highly creditable to countries so young as the Australias. He drew a flattering contrast with other and older colonies, having a population as large as the whole of Australasia, but which had not, in his opinion, yet produced a writer of equal merit. Australia might be said to have created a literature of her own, and to possess a Press which stood second to none in ability and journalistic enterprise. He had read Clarke, Douglas Gordon, Kendal, Rolf Boldrewood, and a few minor colonial writers, and was loud in his praise of a people who had achieved so much in the blic of Letters within a fifty years' period of self-governing ace.

Discussing the plot and ending of *His Natural Life*, he was glad that the story finished as it did. The author remained true to his purpose. His object was to make the convict system, as it was carried on in the colonies, detested of all right-minded men. In this and in a dramatic sense also he was right in carrying Richard Dawes's sufferings and misfortunes down even to his death. Any romantic ending that would have saved the hero and heroine of such a story from the wreck of the captured ship and landed them on some lone Pacific island, "to live happy ever afterwards," would have been stupidly wrong. It would have detracted from the tragic interest with which the torturings of Dawes had invested him as the victim of a brutal system which the book has since powerfully helped to reform and modify.

Mark Twain was much interested in one of the stories related by Clarke, in a volume of sketches, about the Scottish patriot convicts, Muir and Palmer. These were tried and transported in 1794, at Edinburgh, for the crime of advocating universal suffrage, and of being suspected of friendliness towards the United Irishmen of Belfast, and of sympathy with the then young Republic of the United States. They were deported to Port Jackson, where Sydney now stands. Muir was a lawyer and an advanced thinker. He had openly lauded George Washington, and subscribed to the principles of the Declaration of Independence. The fate of the intrepid Scotch reformer stirred Washington to active sympathy. He had a ship fitted out in New York for the rescue of Muir. The attempt was successful, and Muir was saved from a convict's doom to lead a stirring and romantic after-career. The ship in which he sailed for Europe was captured by a Spanish privateer, which, in turn, fell into the hands of an English man-of-war. Muir, who fought desperately in the engagement, was wounded in the conflict between the ships. He was recognized by a Scottish soldier on board the English vessel, who did not, however, disclose his identity. He was ultimately exchanged as a prisoner and landed in France, and was accorded a triumphant reception in Paris by the Revolutionary Directory. He died of his wounds soon after, and lies buried in Père-la-Chaise. Mark Twain remarked, on hearing my version of the story as told by Clarke, "Well, I shall always think better of old George (Washington) for having rescued Muir."

Unlike some celebrities, Mark Twain is not parsimonious with his talent. He entertained us in the smoke-room of the

*Mararoa* with some capital anecdotes, which, however, cannot be done justice to in the retelling. It is in the art of telling a story where the mirth and merit lie, and Mark Twain's yarns in anyone else's narration is worse than leaving the Prince of Denmark out of the play of "Hamlet." He told us two good stories at the expense of some friends and the Custom House of New York. Crossing the Atlantic from Liverpool a few years ago he found himself the fellow-passenger of a large number of his countrymen. Some of the "boys" made up their minds to play a trick on Mark. They each planted their smuggled cigars among his small baggage, and awaited results. They knew he would not deny possession of such wares when questioned, and they all crowded round him when the Customs officer came along. They counted upon him being compelled to pay up for the cargo. "They stood round when the critical moment arrived, and were ready to explode with laughter at my expense. This is how it ended:—

"The Customs officer: 'Your name, please?'

"'Mr. Clemens.'

"'Are you Mark Twain?'

"'Yes.'

"'Then pass on.'

"So," said Mark, laughing at the recollection of the incident, "I was neither asked to pay nor to lie, and I had all the cigars to myself, for you may be sure I did not deliver any of them to those who tried to play that little game upon me."

On another occasion he encountered a much more exacting Customs official at the same port. "I had nine parcels from Liverpool, and I badly wanted to get them through without their being opened. I gave the number and was asked to open some of them. 'Well, I am Mark Twain,' I pleaded, 'and you surely don't suspect me of harbouring any evil against Uncle Sam?'

"'But we have a duty to perform.'

"'Yes, of course, but the Customs regulations don't say, in teaching the rules of duty, you must rummage and upset Mark Twain's personal effects when he comes back to the land of his birth?'

"'We are sorry, but we have no alternative.'

"'Did you,' I cut in, 'compel General Sherman to open his trunks when he came home a short time ago?'

"'Oh! we could not trouble General Sherman. You know he is —'

"'No, you can allow General Sherman to pass, a man whom I

made famous, and you stop me! You give a pass to the pupil and you deny the same right to the master; I ——'

"Official to Customs officer: 'Let him go!' and I got my nine parcels through all right."

Mark's recollections of his "pilgrimage to the tomb of his ancestor, Adam," in Jerusalem, were doubly interesting to me, as I had been in Palestine in 1885, and had, of course, read his impressions of the Holy Land. His stay there was about as long as my own, and he sorrowed with me over the modern vulgarism—chiefly the work of his own touring countrymen and women—that had recently caused a railway to be built in a country which ought to be allowed to remain for all time with its Biblical associations and places as little touched as possible by the irreverent hands of science and steam-cars. Whether one's visit to such a land be prompted by religious purpose or by the romance of curiosity, the chief attractiveness of the country is its fascinating conformity with our impressions of it from reading the Bible. In my journeys from Mount Carmel to Nazareth, and thence to Tiberias, and the subsequent ride from the Plain of Jezreel to Jerusalem, Jericho, and the Dead Sea, with an experience of the Desert of Judea and the country around Bethlehem, the one predominant sentiment in my mind was, how familiar it all looked, how unlike any other land on earth it was, and how it ought to remain a reservation for Christendom for all time, free from the iconoclastic spirit of change.

Whoever among my readers suffers from insomnia will be interested in Mark Twain's "infallible remedy" for that truly infernal affliction. Being an ancient victim of that sleep fiend, and always visited by it after addressing public meetings, I was curious to know whether my distinguished fellow-traveller had any similar experience. "Yes, I suffered much from that malady years ago owing to hard work. It does not trouble me now, though my work is still heavy and more exacting as the years steal on. I began the search for a cure by drinking a glass of beer going to bed. This gave a little relief for a short time. Then I exchanged my beer for a prescription of two ounces of whiskey. This worked the desired cure. It proved a real remedy, so much so that I began to like my medicine. The two ounces of 'Scotch' grew into five ounces. Then the trouble began again. It was the old story of taking too much of a good thing. The five ounces sent me off all right, and brought about a kind of angelic sensation in my head; but in a couple of hours sleep would leave me, and the old trouble came back to stay all night. I then

sought another remedy, and found it. Yes, sir, an infallible remedy. I got hold of it by accident. It was a child's German grammar! I began to read it on lying down. I never got through a single page at a time. Sleep came along and never gave the grammar a chance. Try it, and you will find it a dead certain cure. I tried hard to induce the late General Grant to adopt it, but I could not succeed. Otherwise he might not have died so soon."





## CHAPTER LXII.

### FROM TASMANIA TO NEW ZEALAND

THE distance from Hobart to the Bluff, New Zealand, the most southern part of that colony, is close upon a thousand miles. The Tasman Sea, over which the voyage is made, recalls, but only by marked contrast, the ideal voyaging within the Barrier Reef along the shores of Queensland. In the calmest weather known in this southern region the motion of a ship is affected by the bulging action of the huge waves, as they come rolling up, from the Lord knows where, and lift the vessel like a cork on their crests. We were followed almost all the way across by flocks of albatrosses. They kept up with the *Mararoa* without any apparent effort of the wings. I have watched them for hours together without seeing a single ordinary motion of a wing. Their wings are of enormous size in proportion to the body of the bird. I was told of one that had measured fifteen feet from the tips of the extended wings. The average width will be fully eight feet. The wings are deeply arched in the centre so as to catch the air, and the action of the bird, in literally sailing along, is simply one of "trimming the sails," in moving the body so that the outstretched wings shall get the necessary propelling force from whatever wind may be blowing. Even when flying against the wind the wings are rarely used except as sails. The action resembles "tacking" more than that of the usual motion of birds on the wing. The head of the albatross is the most repulsive which nature has given to any bird, and might well lend itself to poetic fancy in the "Ancient Mariner."

We were not sorry to reach the Bluff and terminate our acquaintance with the Tasman Sea. There was likewise a great attraction in the "farthest off" colony of the whole Australasian group, in its stirring history of Maori wars and present-day

experiments in a new-age legislation, and I landed on the shores of "Maoriland" with the pleasurable feeling that I was about to travel through the most progressive and thoroughly democratic country in the world of our time.

By a kind of geographical paradox New Zealand, though the most remote of the Australasian group from the old countries, is about the best known of any of them "at home." This is probably accounted for by the more intelligent activity of its government agency in London over those of the others, for there is no colony better advertised in the British Press than that of New Zealand, whether in its produce or politics.

The greater knowledge of New Zealand possessed by the home public is doubtless due to the memories of the Maori wars, and of the determined stand made by this native race against extermination. These stirring events occurred in the youth of the present generation. I recollect the Waikato war well. The fratricidal Civil War in the United States was monopolizing the attention of the world at the time, and I remember when, as a combined "printer's devil" and newsboy, I was selling my *Manchester Guardians* and *Examiners* and *Bury Times* in Haslingden, hawking the news of "great battles in Virginia" along with "desperate fighting in New Zealand." Brave as were the many deeds of daring exhibited on both sides of the American war, I question whether greater courage or more noble examples of heroism can be found in the annals of modern war than were associated with Rewi's defence of Orakau against Generals Cameron and Carey's overwhelming forces, or in the final struggle of the admittedly unjust Waikato campaign around the pah at Rangiriri. It was honourable alike to besieged and besiegers to find the British troops rushing into the pah, after its surrender, to have the honour of shaking hands with its dauntless defenders in admiration of their pluck. Their after-treatment was in keeping with the injustice which had brought on the war. These brave Maoris, though vindicated in the action of the governor over the Waitara land trouble, were sent as common malefactors to the hulks, despite the intercession of both General Cameron and Sir George Grey, who pleaded for a magnanimous treatment of noble foes. But what was wanted by the then rulers of New Zealand was the land of the Maoris, and not a reputation for any of the chivalry of warfare.

The Maori race still inhabits a part of New Zealand, thanks to its powers of resistance to the twin heralds of Anglo-Saxon

conquest, rifles and rum. They have suffered severely from both. The raider's gospel to "maxim your oppressor"—that is, the man whose country you want to grab, and who savagely and strangely resists the operation—was fully felt by the natives of New Zealand; but rum is more likely to carry out what "a Christian ought to do" more easily than the more costly expedients of civilizing a people by way of teaching them the ten commandments, through rifles and confiscation. The record of a Maori chief in after years compelling every Englishman in his territory to pledge himself in writing to forfeit one pound for every native who would be found under the influence of drink near the rum store, is a pathetic comment upon the missionary work of European civilization.

The first sight of land as the ship sails into Foveaux Strait, past Stewart Island, promises little in the way of pleasing scenery. The shores on either hand are neither attractive nor imposing, offering only glimpses of poor soil, timber, and scrub. But after landing at the Bluff, and climbing four or five hundred feet up the side of the hill, a very fine prospect of sea and islands is enjoyed on the one hand, with a good landscape view of plains and mountain ranges extending north and east on the other. The first impression of Southland (as the southern portion of the larger, or middle, island is called) reminded me of parts of the south of Ireland. A closer intimacy with the province of Otago strongly impressed this resemblance on my mind. The country showing itself to an observer on the Bluff is well timbered and well watered, and looks an average tillage and grazing region. Locally, big efforts were being made to create a town around the little port at which the steamers land their passengers. There is a scattered population of a few hundred people living back from the wharves in well-built houses, and the progress of the Bluff to them is a subject of more supreme importance than the affairs of any other district in New Zealand.


The railway to Dunedin and Christchurch starts from here, and gives you at Invercargill, seventeen miles distant, the first look at a New Zealand town and settled country. The impressions are most favourable. The town and environs have a population of about ten thousand. Viewed from the summit of the municipal water-works building, the sight of the well-planned, neat, and healthy-looking little city is as pleasing as the surrounding country looks promising in agricultural resources. The streets run at right angles to each other, and are much wider than the thoroughfares of the average Australian towns. Trees are seen everywhere, not

as a bush, but in regulated arrangement, giving a very pretty appearance of cosiness and comfort to the place. There is an ornamental reserve right round the town one hundred and fifty yards wide, nicely planted, as a citizens' promenade or drive, on which the municipality have prohibited any building trespass. Land immediately beyond the boundaries of the town is also reserved for expansion, so that the ground-rents of the growing city will become a source of municipal revenue.

Invercargill, as its name suggests, had a Scotch foundation, and the canny race is still the largest element in the population. The town is the centre of a rich section of Southland, and a junction for two or three railway lines extending north, east, and west. There is a large and an increasing export of food produce from the well-farmed lands around, and everything you see and hear in the bright little place speaks of a future full of hope for its advancement and prosperity. There are several manufacturing establishments, including foundries and breweries, in the town itself.

The municipal life of the first town you meet in New Zealand, when landing at the Bluff, has much interest for an inquisitive reformer. I was glad to learn that land values support the water charge, and pay a share of the cost of municipal government as well. Land values pay 10 per cent. on their annual rental income. For instance: If the owner of a "lot" valued at, say, £500, receives £40 rent per year for it, he has to pay 10 per cent. on that £40 towards general municipal rates, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of an additional rate towards the cost of supplying the town with water. Other property pays a similar 10 per cent. on its annual letting value. The municipality owns its own gas, and has the right to acquire the tramways at the expiration of a lease now held by a company for a term of fourteen years. In fact, Invercargill is a miniature Glasgow in the enlightened and progressive character of its municipal government.

The town has some very fine schools for its size and population. I visited the Catholic voluntary school, which is under the efficient charge of Dominican Sisters, and was well pleased with the cheerful and healthy appearance of the schoolrooms, but particularly with the well-dressed, bright, and intelligent looks of the children. The school is, by the wish of its managers, under government inspection, but does not receive any support from the state. The public schools appeared in every way worthy of the Scottish people's high reputation for educational progress.



Here, and in the drive from Invercargill to Gore, on the way to Dunedin, you meet such old friends as the hawthorn bush, the blackbird, thrush, and sparrow, with other successful emigrants from the bird and flower and tree world of "home." This experience begins to influence your mind, taste, and opinions very much in favour of most things in Maoriland. It is all very well to try and remember the natural glories of Queensland, the wondrous scenery of New South Wales, the gold mines of Victoria, and all the rest; but when you hear the familiar notes of a blackbird, or your eye is gladdened with the sight of a hedgerow of hawthorns or a bank of furze bushes, the bias of natural kinship asserts itself, and you begin to speculate about a possible line of terrestrial communication and influence right through Mother Earth, from Otago to the centre of Ireland. Once embarked on this line of thought, you are inclined to find everything as it ought to be in the best and brightest of New Zealand worlds.

There is a very strong resemblance to parts of southern Ireland in the section of country stretching from Invercargill to Dunedin. It recalls the scenery on a journey from Cork to Limerick Junction, only the mountains in the west of the Otago country are giants compared with the Kerry hills, and are crowned with perpetual snow. I did not travel westwards while in Southland, owing to having planned a trip across the New Zealand Alps to the west coast, from the Canterbury plains higher up the Middle Island. I would, however, strongly urge any of my readers who may chance to visit this lovely country to turn westwards, at Invercargill, to Lumsden, and go thence, by combined coach travel and lake steamer, to Milford Sound. The landscape is noted for its beauty and grandeur. It is the home of lakes and bays, mountains and waterfalls, glaciers and gorges, combining to give to this portion of New Zealand the reputation of a Switzerland, a west of Scotland and a Killarney, in scenic combination. Travellers who had been through western Otago made me deeply regret my hurried travel by the descriptions they gave of the wild and extravagant magnificence of nature in this alpine region of the country.

Gore is a small town of about 3000 people. It is forty miles north of Invercargill, and one hundred south of Dunedin. It is a railway junction, and has a mixed tillage and pasture country around it. Like all New Zealand towns, it has a neat, comfortable appearance. I drove from here straight across the country to Lawrence, a distance of seventy or eighty miles; a



fellow-countryman of mine, and a right jolly good fellow, resident at Gore, handling the ribbons in good style, doing the journey over hills, hollows, and rivers in one day, with only one change of horses at Clinton. The country we passed over may be taken as a fair sample of the southern province of the Middle Island. The soil appeared to be a mixed clayey and sandy one. The whole area is exceedingly well supplied with rivers and streams, as is the entire country. In its abundance of water New Zealand again resembles Ireland and Scotland, and is in fortunate contrast with the more or less riverless Australian countries. Oats grow very well in the whole district, and the yield per acre, I was told, equalled that of the lands of the old countries. All the home fruits also grow in profusion, while grapes, peaches, nectarines, and other delicate fruits thrive freely in the open air. Immense sheep farms were, however, the chief industrial feature of these districts of Southland and Otago. We passed through some a dozen miles in extent, with gates across the road where the timid right of public thoroughfare touched upon the superior one of the squatter's property. Many of these immense "runs" are not paying over well since the fall in the price of wool, and the excellent lands comprised in them will be available for valuable tillage farms some day.

The country embraced in our ride was very little encumbered with bush or timber. In this respect it differed again from the chief feature of the Australian landscape. Enough timber is left, however, to give the land a fairly sheltered appearance, while it offers no impediment to cultivation or immediate farming settlement. After crossing the Molyneux river of the golden sands timber becomes scarcer, until it all but finally disappears as the hilly regions near Lawrence are reached.

This beautiful river, the Clutha or Molyneux, comes down from the Ragged Range mountains for a course of about a hundred miles, and brings gold with it which its waters wash from some auriferous formations on its journey. It is wider than the Thames at both places on our cross-country ride at which we had to cross it. A large ferry-punt, capable of taking a couple of waggons on board, is hitched to an overhead cable, stretching across the river on high poles, and the strong current sends the punt across, guided by a grooved pulley on the cable. The river is dredged for gold, and the enterprise pays. I saw one of these dredges at work lifting up the sand from the bottom of the river. Gold was first found near the source of the river in the Sixties, and the dredging of the Molyneux has yielded a steady output of payable

gold since this species of “mining,” or fishing, rather, for the precious metal began.

Lawrence is a gold-mining centre, and was known in the early times of the Sixties as “Gabriel’s Gully.” I believe it is the oldest gold mine in New Zealand. The road down from the hills to Lawrence is steep, as are most of the New Zealand roads at many points; but a driver, professional or amateur, in that colony thinks no more of taking a coach and four through a foaming mountain torrent, or along a road bordering a precipice, or round the corner of a gorge-track, than a London jarvey does of driving a hansom down Piccadilly. It is an ideal country for coaching, and a good deal of travelling has to be done that way where railways are not yet or cannot be built. The horses are the very best in the colonies, and are well treated, as they ought to be, while the drivers are, I think, among the very best in the world.

Lawrence is a snug-looking little town, nicely planted with trees in portions of it, and very clean for a mining “camp.” It has only about two thousand people now, though it must have had many more in the days when “Gabriel’s Gully” was in its booming stage. I drove up the Gully to see the sluicing for gold. The road leads into a wild-looking ravine, both sides of it being lit up with a kind of native gorse bush, which happened to be in full bloom. The mine is what is called a cement formation. The gold is sluiced out of its matrix by means of powerful jets of water directed against the face of the cliff. Water for this purpose is carried a distance of twenty miles. It is sent down with a hundred feet of a direct fall, carrying enough force with it to cut a man’s leg through if placed before the nozzle of one of the hydrants. Miners apply the water against the face of the cliff, and the earth that is brought down in this way is sent in channels to where it is again driven up by water force through pipes to troughs, some of them fifty feet high. The gold is found on the cleaning out of the bottom of these troughs. There were only about fifty men at work at the time of my visit. I was told that £14,000 of gold had been sluiced out of the Gully the previous year. The company working the mine at present is an English one.

From Lawrence to Dunedin you pass through an exceedingly rich country, where you see farming that reminds you of the south-east of Scotland. From Milton on to the capital of Otago it is one succession of the finest agricultural holdings one would wish to find in any country. There are other evidences of

successful settlement on this Taieri plain; factories at the handsome little town of Milton, while nearer Dunedin the celebrated Mossgiel mills are seen, whose admirable woollens find their way into the markets of California, as well as to those of Australia, and are much prized wherever purchased for their beautiful soft material and excellent finish.



## CHAPTER LXIII.

### DUNEDIN

**D**UNEDIN suggests Edinburgh in name and in the nationality of its founders, and in many respects its beauty too. True, there are few cities anywhere that equal Scotland's capital in its rare combination of site, architectural embellishment, outline of streets, monuments, and surroundings. The capital of Otago has a very fine situation too, and presents a strikingly handsome, clean, and healthy appearance. It is unfortunate in having a shallow harbour. Port Chalmers, seven miles away, is the Leith to this New Zealand "auld Reekie," and it is a pity the two places were not closer together. Dunedin is a remarkably well-built city, but its streets, owing to the natural limits and formation of the site, are not imposing in width or character. There are some fine churches, notably St. Joseph's Catholic Cathedral, overlooking the city from an elevated position, and the Presbyterian (Knox's) Church, a very fine Gothic structure, and advantageously situated also. The High School and the University building are also very creditable architectural ornaments to Dunedin. The Town Hall, two or three of the banks, and a couple of hotels, are well up to the average of Australasian city buildings in design and finish, but these about exhaust the catalogue of striking edifices. The terrace character of the highest and best part of the city does not lend itself to the formation of squares. The Octagon is small, and not impressive in any way. There is a statue of Robert Burns found here in a cruelly suggestive position; having a church behind and a public-house in front of it.

Dunedin has one feature which will cause every visitor to bless its early municipal fathers, that is the ornamental belt of reserved land which runs around the hilly portions of the city, and answers all the purposes of a park. No buildings can be erected on this belt, and the citizens are therefore insured for all time against builders' encroachments upon this combined drive, walk, and recreation ground that commands at various places, notably

at the spot called "Photographer's Point," delightful views of the sea beach in the near distance, the hills on the headland, and of the white, clean, bright-looking city below you. The citizens are very proud of the capital of their province, and, as becomes the inhabitants of this antipodean Edinburgh, speak patronizingly of Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland, and find it a grievance that the seat of New Zealand legislation is not found where (they say) it ought to be, in the centre of New Zealand patriotism, culture, and enterprise.

Judging from all the external signs of a city's wealth—build of houses, size, and looks of business establishments, hotels, banks, etc., and especially of the dress and appearance of the people you meet in the streets—I would conclude that Dunedin must be a very prosperous, go-ahead city. It has many flourishing manufactures, and a population, including surrounding suburbs, of about 50,000. The poorer parts of the city lie on a reclaimed piece of foreshore, and, being badly suited for drainage purposes, are not as favoured as the hilly portions of the town in salubrious reputation. On the whole, Dunedin makes a most favourable impression upon the visitor as a wealthy, healthy, and handsome city, having a vigorous population and little, if any, poverty (at least, perceptible to an inquisitive stranger) alongside of its prosperity. Portions of the grounds belong to the Presbyterian Church of the province, as a consequence of a judicious investment made in the land, on which no city then stood, by the founders in the Forties. The city has arisen round what was a small settlement made up of Scottish Presbyterians, who sailed from Glasgow to the spot in, I think, 1843. The land is now very valuable, and its income provides a large revenue for the Presbyterian Church of Otago. Dunedin has the enviable reputation of being the healthiest city in the world, having only an average death-rate of 9·15 to the 1000. Mark Twain's opinion of it is given as a place which was visited by some people from Scotland who were on their way to Heaven, and who, believing they had reached their destination, remained.

From Dunedin north to Oamaru, some seventy miles, the country and scenery resemble what you meet with in going from Dublin to Dundalk: good land, fine farms, sea-coast views, and a well-watered region. Farms are, however, much larger and streams more plentiful, while the soil would equal, nearly all the way, what you find in the barony of Fingal, in County Dublin.

Oamaru is a most unique little town. You think, upon seeing



its main thoroughfares and esplanade, that you have dropped down upon a New Zealand Athens. Numbers of the buildings look like Grecian temples, with colonnades, pillared porticoes, and palatial designs, out of all character and proportion to a small place having about four or five thousand of a population. The explanation of the architectural grandeur of the little "white city" is found in the existence of extensive quarries of white stone close by the town, and, local artistic taste being what it was, the churches, banks, hotels, and public buildings took their classic form. The stone is white with a shade of chrome-yellow in it, and does not lose colour by exposure. The streets of the town are exceptionally wide, and this, together with the graceful style of the chief edifices, gives the place the appearance of a collection of exhibition buildings. The Catholic Church, which is unfortunately on the outskirts, is a basilica of the Doric order, and is flanked inside, on three sides, with slender rows of fluted columns, beautifully finished. It is the handsomest little church in the whole of New Zealand. Its Highland pastor, Father Mackay, is very proud of St. Patrick's, as he ought to be. He told me it would cost about £10,000 before it would be finished.

Oamaru is on the sea-coast with a small harbour, and has a good export trade in agricultural produce and food-stuffs generally, and also in its celebrated white building stone. I drove into the country behind the town to see a large sheep-run, which the government had purchased from the proprietors in furtherance of the new policy of splitting up blocks of good grazing land into small farming holdings. All classes agreed that the dividing up of this huge estate in this manner would confer much benefit upon Oamaru. The land thus acquired was to be let on perpetual state lease at a rent of about four and a half per cent. on the purchase money. These terms were considered advantageous, and the farms were being rapidly applied for.

Timaru, my next stopping place, is also on the east coast, fifty miles north of Oamaru. It is a small seaport, and in its general surroundings and population resembles Oamaru, except in its buildings. The land behind the town, extending westward to the hills, is accounted some of the best in the colony. Timaru is a livelier place than its cousin down the coast. It has several factories, breweries, and other industries, which give it a good manufacturing status as some compensation for its less stately looks and lack of classic taste in architecture. The town and district are said to have a population of 20,000,

but only about a third of that is found located in Timaru. The remainder lies scattered in farming villages and homesteads over the rich rolling country you see extending, with its tillage holdings and grazing runs, north, west, and south, an industrial landscape of peace and plenty. Timaru is a busy, bustling town, wearing a well-to-do and go-ahead look, conscious that it has a splendid location, and resolving not to hide its light under the bushel of self-bashfulness. A drive on the outskirts reveals many handsome cottage residences, with pretty gardens and a fine prospect of seascape in front, and of a serrated mountain range in the hinterland. Mount Cook, in its crested helmet of perpetual snow, is clearly visible sixty miles away, towering in its alpine grandeur of 12,000 feet on the western horizon.

From Timaru to Christchurch, about one hundred miles still north, you pass over the far-famed Canterbury Plains, reputed to be, in their natural richness, what the Darling Downs are to south Queensland. The soil is not, however, as deep, nor is it as rich, as that of the latter country. The sea is supposed to have covered these plains at one time, and shingle is found a few feet below the surface. The plains are about 25 miles broad and 100 in length, and are almost level over the entire area. They are crossed by several streams, which become very swollen in summer and submerge the roads when the snows melt on the western mountains. Several small towns and good-sized villages are passed as you journey on towards "the City of the Plains," and evidences of great wool and agricultural industries are seen all along the route.

I regret my stay at Christchurch was so brief that I cannot speak of it as a city I had thoroughly seen, as in the case of Dunedin, Wellington, and Auckland. What little of it I was privileged to look at impressed me most favourably indeed. Its streets are wider than those of Dunedin, but as the city is built on a level with the surrounding plain, it has a Chicago-like look (on a small scale) of well-built stone edifices, denoting solidity of structure, but offering no elevated centre or suburb from which to obtain a complete view of the place. Its population is somewhere between forty and fifty thousand, including outlying enships; and in people, wealth, and trading reputation it ranks the three other large centres of New Zealand industry and  
rce.

Manufacturing enterprise it is probably ahead of any of its cities. All its leading streets are christened after the principal cities of Great Britain and Ireland, hence the name

"Cathedral City," by which it is known in the colony. The settlement out of which Christchurch has arisen was a Church of England colonization scheme, planned on strictly orthodox and "society" principles. The plan did not, however, work out in line with the prospectus. All the other sects crept in, as is their habit, in time, and their churches are now found in rivalry with that which was once thought would alone supply the spiritual needs of an unmixed community. The democracy came along, too, and built up the city's manufacturing fame, so that the "society" of the prospectus, if it now exists, has to put up with the vulgar association of trading wealth. I only caught a passing glimpse of a few churches and of the main public buildings of the city in driving through the principal thoroughfares, and so limited a view does not allow me to speak with any knowledge of the architecture of Christchurch. It has a high reputation, however, for the taste and costliness of its ecclesiastical edifices, colleges, schools, and the other varied public institutions of which it can, according to repute, justly boast.

I was told while in the city that the wages of ploughmen and labourers employed by the farmers on the Canterbury Plains averaged one pound per week, with food, and that harvest work brought two pounds a week and "tucker."

## CHAPTER LXIV.

### A DRIVE TO THE WEST COAST

HAVING mapped out my tour in the Middle Island, so as to take in a journey right across from the east to the west coast, the route from Christchurch lay over the alpine ridge, through the Otira Gorge to Greymouth. The railway part of the distance ends at Springfield, about forty miles from "the Cathedral City," and from thence on to the west "Cassidy's coaches" are the welcome substitute for the iron horse during two days of probably the most fascinating mountain riding to be found anywhere in the world of wild scenery. One word about these New Zealand coaches and horses before we make a dash for the hills. The coaches are like, yet unlike, the four-in-hands we are familiar with in London and Dublin. They are much larger and stronger in build, and are constructed for the kind of country they are to travel over; to tear along a rough alpine road, cross a roaring mountain torrent, or swim a swollen river. They will do almost anything, except turn a summersault, as they swing along under the capable charge of the safest and most daring drivers to be found anywhere. What enhances the great pleasure of this wonderful drive to Westland is the splendid horses you find ready at every stage to carry you on your journey. You see the evidence in their splendid condition of the excellent treatment and training which gives them their shining coats and eager disposition to "negotiate" the steepest incline or most brawling creek on the way. A coach will carry ten or a dozen passengers, including traps, and four horses are the indispensable number for the heavy mountain road you have to travel.

From Springfield to Porter's Pass, a rise of three thousand feet, you are climbing all the way, the road being frequently so steep that considerate passengers get down and ease the willing teams. The view of the Canterbury Plains below, and of the distant sea line, as you mount the range, is the only prospect that pleases, but

it is indeed full of compensation. The scenery ahead for the first day is wild in the extreme, and grows somewhat monotonous in repetition of winding route, mountain, river, and valley views. We descend from Porter's Pass into Starvation Gully, rightly so named from its bare and inhospitable looks of grassless land and treeless hills. The landscape towards the horizon is tenanted by snow-clad peaks which you never seem to get nearer. They break upon the vision like waves on the sea-beach, one series following the other until their identity is lost in the bewildering confusion of number, form, and features. All this time you are feeling you are no longer in the tropical climate of Queensland. The bracing mountain air, with its snowy coolness, the rapid cloud-changes of form and colour, recall a fine winter morning's ride through Connemara, or in the Highlands of Scotland. It intermingles with your æsthetic exercises in searching for new scenic surprises some curiosity as to whether the end of a seeming *cul de sac* in front of you is where the next halting and refreshment place will be found. Many of the valleys you pass through are the reverse in character to Starvation Gully, and show miniature lakes and fertile fields, with clusters of wooden houses and huts inhabited by shepherds or lumbermen, and children playing on the wayside. We end the first day's journey at the Bealey, three thousand feet or so above the level of the sea, and find a most comfortable hostelry at the Glacier Hotel, and the most attentive of hosts in a fellow-countryman of mine, who claims descent from the one-time sea queen of the Connaught Islands.

Many travellers remain over at the Bealey to explore the glacier attractions of the locality, and for fishing excursions to mountain rivers, but we were off early the following morning. Within a mile of the hotel our horses had to ford a broad river to get on to the road at the opposite side of the valley, leading on to Arthur's Pass, up which for a thousand feet we toiled until we reached the boundary line between the provinces of Canterbury and Westland. From this on to Lake Brunner, at the western extremity of the famed Otira Gorge, no human pen or pencil could do anything like justice to the sublimity, the changing grandeur and incomparable beauty of combined savage and sylvan scenery. It is not a ten minutes' nor an hour's enjoyment of some new and captivating landscape. You roll on, as it were, for a whole day, through an ever-varying panorama of timbered ranges with snow-clad peaks, with massive crags overhanging a track which often proceeds along the edges of precipitous



ravines down which, a thousand feet below us, rushed the angriest of swollen torrents. Now and then we get down to a level with a brawling river of this kind, and cross over its shingly bed to find how the roaring torrent of an hour ago becomes a passable ford as the valley widens and gives the peacefulness of freedom to the stream which murmured so loudly against being imprisoned within the narrow confines of a contracted channel higher up in the hills. Away we spin again, through park-like vistas of quiet beauty, meeting the extraordinary rata tree with its parasitic hangings, resembling a perpendicular shrubbery, and giant fern trees, twenty or thirty feet high, lining our route. All this time we are treading our way in a zigzag course through the gorge down which the Oira river rolls on its course to the Pacific. Now and then we pass within a few feet of a waterfall, leaping down from some rocky ledge hundreds of feet above, while beyond the tops of the nearest pine-clad hills we see the higher mountains lifting their snowy heads as if mocking our desire to reach where they towered supreme in majesty of stature over all.

One feature of this matchless drive has an element of danger in it, which doubtless adds to the reputation of the Oira Gorge among New Zealand lions. This is in the ledge-roads cut out of the side of the rock in the narrowest parts of the ravine. These roads are seldom more than ten or twelve feet wide. They are often hewn clean out of the rocky face of the cliff, a precipice several hundred feet on one hand and the perpendicular wall of the gorge on the other. A stumble of a horse, or a moment's forgetfulness of a driver, might send coach and contents over into the depths below. But there are no such serious mishaps. There is not, I believe, a single accident of the kind on record. The horses seem to know their way as well as the driver, and they career along, whether on a hanging shelf of a footway high in the air or down some steep and narrow course, as if the path was as level and as safe as a road over the Canterbury Plains.

All pleasures have an end, and this ride across the New Zealand mountains terminates within a few miles of the flourishing little town of Greymouth, where, if you have the good fortune to be of the Celtic nationality, you will (in any case) receive a warm welcome at the Brian Boru Hotel. There are several other clean and comfortable hostelries in the town, along with many other evidences of prosperity and progress. Greymouth is a busy trading port on the west coast, being about midway between two gold-mining districts, and having a harbour into which ships

of a couple of thousand tons can enter and load or discharge alongside the main thoroughfare. There is a population of four thousand in the town, and the chief industry is coal mining, with gold mining north and south of the locality. Several fine coal mines are worked within a few miles of Greymouth, and the coal from these and other places higher up the coast will some day find a profitable market in competition with United States and British Columbian coal along the Pacific coast of the American continent.

Greymouth is a well-built town, but with no architectural pretensions. I found myself for the first (and only) time in my political life giving a limited approval to ground-rent landlords in this Newcastle of Westland! The wherefore was this: It is built upon a site which was a Maori reservation, and the original owners of the land—the race who obstinately refused to be exterminated—are the proprietors still! In a word, they are the ground-rent landlords of Greymouth, and the tax they levy on the town only amounts to some £4000 a year. White owners would exact at least five times as much if the others had only consented to be shot or to be civilized into surrendering their rights for rum. They did neither, and this is why the white exploiter—English, Irish, Scotch, or German—has, by the exquisite irony of a fate sometimes prone to poetic justice, to pay the hated Anglo-Saxon ground-rent tax to a subdued but not a conquered race. It was therefore why, in the Brian Boru Hotel, and surrounded by staunch Celtic Land Leaguers (16,000 miles from Ireland, however), I found myself able to lift my glass, in the manner of William, to the ground-rent owners of Greymouth; more power (but no higher rent) to them!

## CHAPTER LXV.

### WESTLAND

THE people of Westland are famed in New Zealand for their all-round good qualities. They are generous to a fault, and uphold the high reputation of the healthiest and one of the most beautiful countries in the world for hospitality. The population is a mixture of mining and farming, with the miners in the majority. A large percentage of the people are from "the other end of New Zealand," Ireland, and the cause of the old country has no warmer supporters anywhere than in these wild west regions of the new home. I went to Kumara and Hokitika, south of Greymouth, to see these mining districts and their hardy inhabitants. Kumara is distant only a dozen miles from Greymouth. The early life in New Zealand of its present Premier, Mr. Seddon, was closely associated with this little mining town. He continues to represent this and other Westland districts in the colony's House of Representatives. The gold mining at Kumara is sluicing. The yellow grains are found as at Gabriel's Gully, and are "mined" by similar methods. It was a flourishing field some years ago in the days of the "rush," but there are only about a couple of hundred miners on it now. They work mainly in partnership in groups of four or six, and the government sell them the necessary water power and appliances at the rate of two shillings and sixpence per man per shift of three hours. The country behind Kumara, stretching back to the mountains, is heavily timbered, and some of the wood, notably the black birch, is valuable for building purposes. That and silver pine, which is also very plentiful, are in good demand in the market, and the lumbering industry thus provided adds materially to Westland's sources of employment.

Hokitika is the capital of the province of Westland, and is a very handsome little town, with three or four thousand of a population. About a dozen years ago it was the scene of a sensational gold rush, and gave ardent gold seekers hopes of



becoming a New Zealand Bendigo. These hopes were not realized, but mining of the kind referred to at Kumara is still carried on, evidently with sufficient rewards to account for the prosperous-looking town you find looking out upon the Pacific. The total output of gold from this west coast (extending from here north to Reefton) mining district has been close upon 6,000,000 ounces; the largest production of any of the seven districts into which the gold-yielding areas of the colony are divided. Auckland, in the North Island, shows most activity at present. The quartz reefs of the Thames and Ohinemuri mines in that district are making a good show, as evidenced by the greatly increased output within the past year. Deep sinking is only in its trial stages yet in these and in other reef-mining regions, and I would predict, judging from what I learned from experienced miners during my tour through this colony, that New Zealand has a big gold-mining future yet before it.

The land on the west coast between the sea and the Alps resembles that on the east side of the mountains in formation, but it is almost entirely covered with forest. When the timber is cleared settlement will surely follow, and workers who were attracted to the Westland gold mines will spread out on the soil, and farming will become more general. In the Greymouth district cultivation is making steady progress. This will doubtless extend down along the coast as population increases, and the forest of birch and pine is cleared away.

From Hokitika there is a magnificent view of Mount Cook and of all its Otago alpine rivals. Though over fifty miles away, the highest New Zealand peak is clearly seen, in its twelve thousand feet of glorious stature, across the intervening prospect of forest, lakes, and lesser mountain heights. It is a wondrous view, rivalling anything that Switzerland offers to a landscape-loving eye in the sublimity and grandeur of nature's greatest works in mountain building.

Returning to Greymouth, my route for Wellington, *via* the west coast, lay through Reefton, the Buller Gorge, and Westport. Reefton is a quartz-mining camp some fifty miles north of Greymouth, and part of an auriferous country extending farther north into the neighbouring province of Nelson. This Nelson gold-mining district is young in years and small in yield, so far; having only produced about a million pounds' worth of gold up to the present. Miners will tell you that all that is needed in this region to find paying stone in unlimited quantities is

enough of development. There are two or three hundred miners employed around Reefton. I heard it reported when there that an English company had acquired some properties in the place, and would soon create an increase of employment. Reefton has a population of about 3000, and the industries of the district are mining and farming.

From here on to the junction, where the Inangahua river is crossed on a ferry like that which takes you over the Molyneux in Otago, the road crosses several mountain torrents, very dangerous in rainy seasons. One of these is named "Larry's Creek," and it has the evil reputation of having swept more than one human being into eternity who dared to venture across it in its angry moods. We were fortunate enough to get through its rushing waters after a heavy night's rain, but it required all our driver's courage and the admirable mettle of four fine horses to resist the fierce torrent as it came sweeping down, "like clans from the hills at the voice of the battle." But then, no kind of opposition, river or Parliamentary, could stop the young member for the district of Inangahua, the enthusiastic "Single Taxer," Mr. Patrick Joseph O'Regan, whose company I was honoured with while touring his constituency, and who undertook, despite all the Larry's Creeks and landlords in creation, to land me at Westport in time to board the boat there that night for Wellington. On from here to the lovely river with the beautiful Maori name the ferns and blackberry bushes were as delightfully common as on a country roadway in Ireland. The valley is fairly well settled, and many comfortable farmsteads are passed, with big hayricks and fat cattle and other produce, denoting good returns for industrious husbandry.

Crossing the Inangahua you enter the cañon of the Buller river, and for three hours you have again, some travellers aver, on a grander scale, the natural glories of the Otira Gorge repeated. It is a veritable piling of Pelion upon Ossa on the part of nature to prepare two such feasts of landscape beauty, so close together in the same region of country. But you pass through it all again with undiminished appetite for views of giant ferns, and gorgeous rata trees, and rushing river; waterfalls and leaping cascades, with hanging roads over frowning pines; mountain tops in forest dress, seen under cloudy skies of changing hue as the sun lights upon moving masses of every vapour that fling their shadows down upon hillsides among pine trees, deepening the growing darkness of the dale and winding gorge. And it is with these visions of wild



and romantic beauty in your recollection you finally cross the Buller river itself and reach the level country, where you will find the pretty seaport town of Westport, sheltered on the southern extremity of Karamea Bay, on the coast of the Pacific.

Westport has a very promising future. It is the outlet for an immense coal region extending thirty or forty miles north. A unique feature of this coalfield is the fact of coal being found, and of an excellent quality, on a mountain two thousand feet above the level of the sea. Instead of the mineral having to be wound up in the usual way out of a shaft, it has to be sent down a steep shoot from the top, literally to the "bottom" of the mine. The complete development of these rich coal seams must be full of future promise for the thriving little seaport. There are good farming lands in the locality which also contain a hopeful prospect of prosperous settlement, and of more people and more cultivation for the not distant by-and-by.

The country north of Westport to the town of Nelson, on Tasman Bay, is most interesting in scenery and in settlement, from what I learned of it from fellow-travellers, but I had to make direct for Wellington by sea and could not pay Nelson a visit. The voyage round Cape Farewell, in and out of Tasman Bay, through French Pass, and across Cook's Straits to Port Nicholson (on the North Island), inside which the capital of New Zealand is beautifully seated round a land-locked bay, is a matter of ten or twelve hours from Westport. It offers some excellent views of coast scenery, especially from Tasman Bay through French Pass, into the Straits which separate the two islands by a channel about a dozen miles wide at its narrowest part.

## CHAPTER LXVI.

### NEW ZEALAND'S CAPITAL

WELLINGTON, or "the Empire City" as its residents name it, is probably the only seat of government in the civilized world which has been created such by arbitration. Auckland was the first capital of the colony, and remained so until 1865. Its extreme northern position, however, was found inconvenient, and a more central one was required. Dunedin and Christchurch had claims of no mean order in their population, wealth and progress, to be a metropolis, but it was felt that a central position, for the two islands forming New Zealand proper, should be the chief consideration. Three prominent public men (one each from Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania) were named by Sir George Grey, then governor of New Zealand, as arbitrators to fix upon the most convenient place on Cook's Straits for the capital of the colony. Port Nicholson was chosen, and Wellington, its more modern name, became the seat of the Legislature and administration, thus fulfilling the anticipation of the Wakefield Land Company, which selected this place, but failed at the time to get Governor Hobson to enrich their property by establishing the capital upon it.

It is built on a fine land-locked harbour, into which the largest ships can safely go, but the entrance is narrow, and not too easy a passage for big vessels in rough weather. The city is cramped in its growth and construction by the physical difficulties of its situation. It has a very striking and pleasing look, as seen when you enter through the Heads from the open sea, and the ship turns sharply round to the full view of the place. Its semi-circular appearance, on the slopes of an amphitheatre of green hills rising up from the water's edge, gives it a delightful aspect. What may be wanting, on a closer inspection, in the planning of streets and in traffic accommodation, is made

up for in picturesqueness of position. The harbour, which is some six or eight miles in breadth and about the same in length, is overlooked, as is the entire city, from some of the suburbs on the hillside. The best view is from the point where the prison looks down in stern penal reprimand upon the little of lawlessness there is found in the busy centre of life and movement below.

Most of Wellington's chief public buildings are of wood, owing, I believe, to the former earthquake habits of the locality. These vibratory visitations are now very rare, and have ceased to frighten either people or builders. The government offices—a massive and not unattractive pile—the governor's residence and the Legislature, are all constructed of timber, and give a western American look to those parts of the city. Some of the churches are constructed of more durable material, and are prominent features in the city's physiognomy owing to being elevated above the level districts round the wharves. They do not, however, compete with the handsome churches of Dunedin or Christchurch, in cost or elegance of design. St. Patrick's Catholic College is a very fine building, with extensive grounds, and situated midway up the suburban hillsides. The College is very popular with all the citizens, as it possesses one of the best bands in Wellington, which gives open-air concerts on Sunday afternoons in the grounds of the institution, when all the gates are thrown open for those to enter who may please to do so. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church has a more conspicuous site and finer appearance than St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral, a rare occurrence in Australasian cities, as the Catholics have almost everywhere secured the best positions for and lavished the most money upon their sacred edifices.

The streets of Wellington are not conspicuous in any way, being, as a rule, narrow and without distinguishing features. There is one fine avenue, well planted with pines and poplars, which shows how, even on a circumscribed area for a city, wide and handsome thoroughfares could be constructed if the municipality could do what it pleased with land and space supposed to be its own, but which, in the case of Wellington, belong to the more omnipotent (white) ground-rent landlord. The wharves are close to the centre of the city, and lend the usual animation of a busy port to the ordinary street scenes of a growing, prosperous community. Wellington tries its best to look the capital it is, and if it lacks the imposing appearance of Dunedin, the more stately and sedate aspect of Christchurch, or the unique natural beauty and position of Auckland, that is due in some respects to



the cramped nature of the location. Despite earthquake reputation, windy air-currents, and its cribb'd and cabined limits, you are very favourably impressed by it, and cannot refuse it a place among your favourite colonial cities.

Wellington neither owns its tramways nor its gas. It has a good many small manufactures, such as a city with an agricultural country behind it usually possesses. The employment thus provided, the growing trade of the port, and the various public services connected with the centre of the colony's administration, give the little capital an air of healthy, bustling, business activity. Like that of all New Zealand cities and towns, its air is remarkably salubrious, and, being situated about midway between the semi-Irish climate of Otago and the sub-tropical one of Auckland, the citizens of Wellington enjoy a kind of mid-Californian temperature and weather, which leaves little to be desired in agreeableness and health-giving qualities. The rate of mortality is less than 11 per 1000 of the population.

New Zealand boasts, and with good reason, of being "in its laws and government probably the most progressive country in the world of to-day. It is a race for the boast of "most" between this colony and that of South Australia, while the other colonies are steadily and surely following in the march towards a real, Ruling Democracy. One man one vote, with the same right for women, carries popular government almost as far as it can go, and renders rule by any minority, privileged by sex or by property, impossible, except as a fiat of all the people's will, constitutionally expressed. I say "almost" because women, though privileged to vote for, are not, as in South Australia, allowed to become, members of the Legislature. This lack of the courage of doing the right in whole and not in halves, will some day be as apparent as was the injustice of depriving one half of the population of the right of citizenship before women suffrage became law. It is true, women may not care to enter the arena of Parliament. Very few will. That, however, is neither a fair reason nor a sound argument against giving them the legal right to do so, if they wish to work for the public good in that way and can get the necessary number of voters to enable them to do so. The modesty of men is, of course, proverbial. Some, even of the most "advanced" of the political kind, talk of "the rule of the people," and denounce the rule of a class, or of an aristocracy, and then forthwith deny, to half the people, what others in their time and power refused to give to any but the fortunate possessors of a property qualification. They are charmingly consistent with the

modesty referred to, but scarcely with the law or the meaning or the justice of their principles.

New Zealand has reached her present advanced constitution through an evolutionary process somewhat different from what led up to Home Rule in her sister colonies. Previous to 1840 there was no recognized British sovereignty over the country. Settlers, traders, adventurers, beach-combers, and filibustering land companies, obtained a footing among the Maoris at various times and places previously, but no attempt was made by them to dispute with the natives the dominion of the islands. In the above year the British government sent an expedition to proclaim them an Imperial colony. No opposition was given to Governor Hobson by those Maori chiefs, who, it is said, agreed to the "Treaty of Waitangi," about which I shall have a little more to say further on. Captain Hobson established himself at Auckland. The form of government which he instituted was that of an Executive, consisting of the governor, an attorney-general, and a colonial treasurer. This system continued until 1852, when it was extended to one of representative institutions embracing a General Assembly, with two chambers: one nominated, and the other elected on a property qualification. Under this plan the executive was responsible to the governor, and not to the Assembly. This restriction, however, only lasted for two years. The colony was divided into six provinces, each to have an "Elective Superintendent," who was to be elected by all those qualified to vote in the province, and a provincial council to be composed of members returned by defined districts. Three more provincial councils were added subsequently, and these, with the central General Assembly, carried on the government of the islands until 1876, when the councils were done away with, and the present constitution substituted. The modifications which have occurred since then have already been indicated. They consist in the broadening of the franchise, its extension to women, and the change of the term of life membership to one of seven years in the Legislative Council.

It is claimed by some staunch progressives that a nominated Upper Chamber, with a limited tenure of membership, is preferable to an elective one. It is, it is argued, endowed with the attribute of weakness when not obtaining its mandate direct from the people, and on that ground is more amenable to the influence of political pressure. In this view the matter of party expediency is put before the principle of elective government. The advantage which a progressive party in power would have in such



a nominated second chamber, for the carrying of certain reforms, is, of course, obvious enough. But is it compensation for the equivalent gain that must sometimes accrue to a reactionary party in a similar position, and for this progressive confession of want of faith in both the elective principle and the will of the people? If reforms in systems of government are to have a party and not a national limit or purpose, they are reduced to the level and value of mere partisan expedients, and have no claim to be considered in the light of real progressive statesmanship. If there is to be a second chamber at all (a point upon which progressives differ in opinion all the world over), there can be no opposition offered to one on the elective plan without the inconsistency of exhibiting a want of faith in direct representative principles and of confidence in the general judgment of the democracy of the country.

Up to seven years ago the Legislative Council in New Zealand was a body nominated for the lifetime of its members. The Ballance ministry carried a bill in that year which reduced the period of membership from life to one of seven years. Then occurred one of the difficulties inseparable from the nominative system. A reforming government found itself confronted with an obstructive Upper Chamber which was not responsible to the people. Neither was it limited in its membership. Mr. Ballance thereupon submitted the names of more councillors to the governor, who at once declined to carry out the advice of his constitutional advisers. The next governor took a similar stand; the Earl of Onslow having resigned, and the term of his successor, the Earl of Glasgow, having begun while the question was at issue. Both governors were clearly exceeding their duties and instructions, in refusing to recognize the manifest desire of the people and the clear constitutional right of the elected government of the country. They, however, stood by the conservative interests in the Upper Chamber. Mr. Ballance was then induced to refer the matter to the arbitrament of the Colonial Office. In doing so he was submitting a prerogative of the colony's constitution to the peril of a Colonial Secretary's will. Sir George Grey, the veteran progressive reformer, opposed this dangerous proceeding but it was persisted in nevertheless, and the decision turned out to be in favour of Mr. Ballance.

The Council or Upper Chamber consists at present of forty-four members. Among the names are found those of "The Hon. Hori Kerei Taiarou, and the Hon. Major Ropata

Wahawaha," representing the remnant of the Maori people. There are several working men also among the New Zealand "Lords," these having been added to the councillors when the membership was enlarged in 1892. Councillors receive £150 a year and travelling expenses. One pound five shillings per day is deducted from this honorarium for absence without sufficient cause extending beyond five days in any session.

New Zealand is the only colony of the seven which calls its popular Chamber the "House of Representatives." In each of the others it is the "Legislative Assembly." Whether this is due to its nearer proximity to the United States, or to some other cause, I did not learn while in the country. New Zealand does not, of course, count itself as an "Australian" colony. It refused to join the Federal convention in the Federation movement. In this I think she is acting wisely and in her own best interests. The wisdom of letting well alone is as applicable to the acts of nations or colonies as to those of individuals.

The House of Representatives has seventy white and four Maori members. Excepting the cities of Dunedin, Auckland, Christchurch, and Wellington, which each return three members, the country is divided into single-member constituencies. The Parliaments are triennial, and the general election takes place on one day. Each member of the Lower House receives £240 a year, with travelling expenses to Wellington during the session. The sum of £2 per day is deducted from this salary for absence such as that already mentioned in the case of members of the Council. The only qualifications required for membership of the House of Representatives are, to be on the register of electors, to be twenty-one years or over, and—not to be a woman.

New Zealand has an extended system of local government. It embraces 95 boroughs, 81 counties, 241 road districts, 41 town districts, 21 river boards, 23 harbour boards, and a few other bodies. The powers exercised by these public bodies are pretty well indicated in their names. Their revenues are derived from three or four sources: direct rates, local taxes on land, and grants from the government. The direct municipal taxation averages about one pound per head of population yearly. Land is taxed upon its annual value as a rule, but some bodies levy upon the capital value. The Rating Act of 1894 says: "The rateable value of any property means the rent at which such property would let from year to year, deducting therefrom 20 per cent. in case of houses, buildings,

and other perishable property, and 10 per cent. in case of land and other hereditaments; but shall in no case be less than 5 per cent. on the value of the fee simple thereof." It is computed that the present unimproved value of the property of the colony amounts to about £76,000,000, and the assessed value of improvements at £46,000,000. Not counting either personal savings or national debt, this would represent property averaging more than £150 per head of population.

## CHAPTER LXVII.

### NEW ZEALAND SCHOOL SYSTEM

ELEMENTARY education is free, compulsory, and secular in New Zealand. It is generously provided for by the state. At the end of 1895 there were about 130,000 children (not counting Maoris) on the rolls of the state schools. As in some other colonies, school children living near a railway, but at a distance from the nearest school, are privileged to travel free by train to and fro. This provision is also extended to all children under fifteen who attend private schools. The sum allowed by the state for the education of each child amounts to about £3 15s. "for every unit of average attendance." There are additional parliamentary grants towards the maintenance of school buildings, a capitation allowance of one shilling and sixpence "for the maintenance of scholarships tenable in secondary schools," and a grant in aid of inspection. Teachers are well paid. In 1895 there were five teachers receiving "not less than £400 each"; sixty-two not less than £300; two hundred and twenty-two less than £300, but over £200; one thousand two hundred had less than £200, but over £100; while two thousand more teachers, "including 1020 pupil teachers and 190 teachers of sewing," had less than £100 each, as yearly salary.

There are thirteen School Districts in the colony, each having an education board. These districts are again subdivided into smaller school-committee districts. The members of these school committees are elected by the householders. The education board is, in turn, elected by the school committees in each (larger) district. The money voted by Parliament for the schools goes to the boards, which are responsible for its disbursement. Teachers are appointed by the boards, in consultation with the school committees concerned. Inspectors receive their appointments from the boards but carry on their duties under regulations

made by the Minister of Education, who is a member of the government.

Secondary education is provided for in some twenty-five schools, partly maintained by endowments of land and part by the fees of scholars. The income from endowments is about £25,000.

The University of the colony is modelled somewhat like the institution known as "the Royal University of Ireland." It provides scholarships and confers degrees, but has neither lecturers nor professors. Its income is small, but so also is its expenditure. Three provincial colleges, those of Otago, Christchurch, and Auckland, are well equipped with revenues and all the other requirements for providing a first-class higher education for the aspiring youth of New Zealand.

In 1895 an Act was passed encouraging technical education. Parliament can grant subsidies to classes organized for the teaching of science and art, and for the fitting-up of workshops attached to public schools for purposes of manual instruction. On the whole, for a total (estimated) population of 700,000, New Zealand has made provision for the educational needs of its people which will favourably compare in liberality with any other part of the world having a like number of people.

The Catholics are a smaller minority in this than in any of the other colonies, being only about one-eighth of the whole population. They support their own schools without assistance of any kind from the state. In this respect they are no worse off than the Catholics of the other colonies. This fact, however, does not tend to sweeten the reflection that, while performing equal educational work with the public schools for the service of the state, they receive nothing in return from its funds. The absence of a direct school rate mitigates the grievance somewhat, but not the cost of maintaining the voluntary schools.

In South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales there is at present what may be called a working friendly alliance, or political understanding, between the Liberal parties in power and the respective Labour parties of these colonies. In New Zealand there has been a virtual fusion of similar forces since the advent to power of Mr. Ballance in 1891. This difference in policy by no means implies that the Labour movement in New Zealand is less progressive than on the continent of Australia. On the contrary, it is shown in the clearest and best way—in the scope and character of the legislation of the Ballance and Seddon governments—that the



working classes of Maoriland have obtained by their political efforts and the co-operation of progressive auxiliaries more pro-Labour laws and larger slices of a wise and beneficial state socialism for their country than their brethren in any other part of Australasia have yet won. This may, of course, be due more to fortuitous circumstances than to any particular plan of campaign. It is not often in a political lifetime that the cause of Labour finds such able and thorough advocates as Sir George Grey, Mr. Ballance, Mr. Reeves, Mr. Seddon, Sir Robert Stout, and Mr. McKenzie in the ranks of Liberalism. Though not in any way a Socialist, no Labour or popular cause could find a truer ally or more sincere supporter than the Grand Old Reformer of New Zealand, Sir George Grey. Foolish indeed would have been the counsels that could have advised the Labour bodies of that colony to refuse all that these men have done for the workers, for democracy, for land reform, during the last ten years, unless, at the outset, they had consented to swallow some intransigent programme eloquently, but aimlessly, calling for the socialist millennium. New Zealand Labour organizations and working men were wiser in this generation than some children of light in other parts of the Labour world.

There is not in any other country in the world a more valuable or more enlightened body of Labour laws than those now upon the statute book of this progressive colony. They cover almost every risk to life, limb, health, and interest of the industrial classes. They send the law, as it were, everywhere a worker is employed for daily wages to fling the shield of the state over him or her in the labour of livelihood. The bare enumeration of these laws will indicate the far-reaching ground they cover:—The Coal Mines Act, the Master and Apprentices Act, the Conspiracy Law Amendment Act, the Trade Union Act, the Servants' Registry Offices Act (for the protection of servant girls against the risks of dishonest offices of that kind), Contractors and Workmen's Lien Act, three amended Employers' Liability Acts, three amended Shipping and Seamen's Acts, two Shops and Shop-assistants Acts, the Factories Act, and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1894. Every student of Labour legislation should obtain from the New Zealand Government Agency in London a copy of the volume containing the twenty Acts which make up this splendid code of remedial laws. He will then learn what Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen

can do towards lessening the risks and hardships of labouring life without either "frightening capital away" or unduly "interfering with individual liberty"—objections we are only too familiar with in other parts of the same empire whenever any similar change is spoken of or attempted in the interest of wage-earning humanity.

## CHAPTER LXVIII.

### THE LABOUR LAWS OF NEW ZEALAND

THESE Labour laws have a twofold purpose—to adjust, as far as possible, the relations between the employer and worker, and to protect the wage-earner against either an injury to his or her interest through oppression, or to their health through insanitary surroundings at work. These beneficent ends are reached without any irritating official interference in the business affairs of the country. The usual outcry about “socialistic experiments” and all the rest was raised against Mr. Reeves and his colleagues when these measures were first brought forward, but the tests of time and experience have shown how little ground there was for any such alarm. Whatever real fears may have honestly existed in some minds as to the possible injurious effects of these proposals have been largely dispelled by the industrial peace which they have been instrumental in securing for the whole community.

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, passed in 1894 by the efforts of its author (then Minister of Labour and Education, now Agent-General in London), has attracted much attention outside New Zealand. An Act with a similar purpose, but permissive in its operations, was passed, as already described, in the New South Wales Legislature in 1892. It was limited in duration to four years, and was not a success. The New Zealand bill was more skilfully drawn, and, possessing the element of a gentle compulsion, has so far achieved its aim. The Act begins by inviting all parties to join “in lawful association for the purpose of protecting or furthering the interests of employers or workmen in, or in connection with, any industry in the colony.” Such parties as accept the legal invitation are allowed to register themselves as “an industrial union,” and this step once taken they are enticed on through a network of solicitations, provisions, and safeguards, until they find themselves, almost without knowing it, agreeing to everything that follows.

Trades Unions, or any other labour organization, or any combination of employers, can register as individual bodies without a mixed association of workers and employers. Once registered, they are in the network of arbitration:—

“The effect of registration (Clause 10) shall be to render the industrial union, and all persons who may be members of any society or trade union, so registered as an industrial union at the time of registration, or who after such registration may become members of any society or trade union so registered, subject to the jurisdiction by this Act given to a Board and the Court respectively, and liable to all the provisions of this Act, and all such persons shall be bound by the rules of the industrial union during the continuance of the membership.”

Provision is then made for industrial agreements between employers and employees, whereby disputes may be prevented. Clause 21 declares:—

“Every industrial agreement duly made and executed shall be binding on the parties thereto, and on every person who at any time during the term of such agreement is a member of any industrial union, trade union, or association party thereto, and on every employer who shall in the prescribed manner signify to the Registrar of the Supreme Court where such agreement is filed concurrence therein, and every such employer shall be entitled to the benefit thereof, and be deemed to be a party thereto.”

Then follow details relating to what members of Boards of Conciliation may do in the way of visiting workshops and factories connected with disputes. These Boards are thus created—

“Clause 30.—In and for every district there shall be established a Board of Conciliation, to have jurisdiction for the settlement of industrial disputes occurring in such district, which may be referred to it by one or more of the parties to an industrial dispute, or by industrial agreement.”

The Governor may determine the number of persons who (together with the Chairman) shall compose the Board of such district, subject, however, to the express provisions of this Act, and such number shall be stated in the notice of the constitution of the district.

“32. With respect to the first and subsequent elections of Boards, the following provisions shall have effect:—

“(1) Every Board shall consist of such equal number of persons as the Governor may determine, being not more than six nor less than four persons, who shall be chosen by the industrial unions of employers and of workmen in the industrial district respectively, such unions voting separately, and electing an equal number of such members.

“(2) The Chairman of such Board shall be in addition to the number of members before mentioned, and be elected as hereinafter provided.

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"(3) Every Board shall be elected in the following manner:—

"(a) The Clerk shall act as Returning Officer, and do the acts and things hereinafter mentioned.

"(b) First elections of a Board shall be held within thirty days after the constitution of the district, and the Returning Officer shall give fourteen days' notice in one or more newspapers circulating in the district of the day and place of election, which shall be so arranged that the industrial unions of employers shall vote at one time, and the industrial unions of workmen at another time on the day fixed: Provided that the Governor may from time to time extend the period within which any election shall be held for such time as he thinks fit.

"(c) Persons shall be nominated for election in such manner as the rules of the industrial union may prescribe, or, if there be no such rule, nominations shall be made in writing by the Chairman of the union, and lodged with the Returning Officer at least three days before the date of election. Each nomination shall be accompanied by the written consent of the person nominated, and forms of nomination shall be provided by the Returning Officer on application to him for that purpose.

"(d) When all the nominations have been received, the Returning Officer shall give notice of the names of persons nominated by affixing a list thereof on the door of his office at least one clear day before the day of election.

"(e) If it shall appear that no greater number of persons are nominated than require to be elected, the Returning Officer shall at once declare such persons elected.

"... The Clerk shall, after the completion of the election, appoint a day for the first meeting of the members elected, and shall give at least three days' notice in writing to each member. At such meeting the members shall elect some impartial person, not being one of their number, and willing to act, to be Chairman of the Board."

Clauses 43 and 44 empower the Board to adopt such steps as it may deem fit to settle any dispute referred to it. Should this body itself be unable to come to a satisfactory decision it may refer the matter in question to a small committee of its members fairly representing each side. If a settlement or reconciliation be unattainable in this way, either party to the dispute can appeal to the Court of Arbitration, which is constituted as follows:—

"47. There shall be one Court of Arbitration for the whole colony for the settlement of industrial disputes pursuant to this Act. The Court shall have a seal, which shall be judicially noticed, and impressions thereof admitted in evidence in all Courts of judicature and for all purposes.

"48. (1) The Court shall consist of three members, to be appointed by the Governor, one to be so appointed on the recommendation of the councils or a majority of the councils of the industrial associations of workmen in the colony, and one to be so appointed on the recommendation of the councils or a majority of the councils of the industrial associations of employers of the colony: Provided that if there shall be no industrial associations of employers, then, in their stead, such recommendations as aforesaid shall be made by the industrial unions of employers.



"No recommendation shall be made as to the third member, who shall be a Judge of the Supreme Court, and shall be appointed from time to time by the Governor, and shall be President of the Court; and, in case of the illness or unavoidable absence of such Judge at any time, the Governor may appoint some fit person, being a Supreme Court Judge, to be and act as President, who shall hold office only during the illness or unavoidable absence of such Judge."

The powers of the Court are then defined. Either party to a dispute can be represented by counsel. Witnesses can be called and compelled under penalties to attend. Evidence can be demanded under oath, as in ordinary courts. Testimony bearing on the case can be given at a distance through magistrates. Contempt of court towards this tribunal is punishable as in the case of regular law courts.

Should any party to the dispute not attend, the Court has power under the Act to proceed *ex parte*. Provisions are made to enable the Court to refer the case to an outside Board for investigation and report where it may think a settlement may be thus arrived at sooner. The Court can also dismiss frivolous appeals to its jurisdiction, whether by trades union or employers' associations or individuals, and decree that such parties shall pay costs. Should a dispute be left to the final decision of the Court, it can determine its award under Clause 69 in what manner it shall deem just and equitable. One party may have to pay the other the costs incurred, or the same may be apportioned between the disputants; but there is this reasonable provision in the law: "No costs shall in any case whatever be allowed on account of any agents, counsel, or solicitor appearing for any party."

There is another equally judicious proviso in Clause 70, which declares:—

"The award shall be framed in such manner as shall best express the decision of the Court, avoiding all technicality where possible, but shall state in clear terms what is or is not to be done or performed by each party or person affected by the decision, and may provide for an alternative course to be taken by any party to the proceedings, or by any person affected thereby; but no award shall be void or vitiated in any way because of any informality or want of form, or any non-compliance with the provisions of this Act."

The award and its enforcement are next dealt with as follows:—

"75. (1.) The Court may, when making its award, or subsequently, on the application of any of the parties, order that a duplicate of any award shall be filed in the Supreme Court office, and on filing of such duplicate, but not otherwise, by leave of that Court or a Judge thereof, such award may be enforced in the same manner as a judgment or order of the Supreme Court to the same effect, and either against the property of any industrial union, trade

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union, or association, or against the property or person of any person named in or affected by any such award, and with the like consequences as such judgment or order could be enforced under the ordinary practice of the Supreme Court; and if there shall be any doubt as to the person, union, or association against whom or which, or as to the amount for which, such award may be enforced, such Court or Judge shall have full power to make such order and give such directions as may be necessary to give effect to this enactment, upon such evidence as to it or him shall seem sufficient.

“(2.) If no duplicate of an award be filed, the award shall be taken to be a direction only to the parties to the arbitration, and no proceedings shall be had or taken and no process shall issue for the enforcement thereof.”

The following limitations are then provided :—

“77. No process shall be issued for the enforcement of any award by a payment from any industrial union, trade union, association, or person of a greater sum than five hundred pounds, or from any individual on account of his membership of a union or association of any greater sum than ten pounds.

“78. Notwithstanding anything herein contained, when any member of an industrial union or trade union, or any other person, is liable under an award to pay or contribute to the payment of any money, he may be sued individually for such payment or contribution by any person or body entitled to enforce or obtain such payment in any Court of competent jurisdiction.”

Some sixteen trade disputes were adjudicated upon under the Act up to 1896, and no strikes or lock-outs occurred during that period. A good proportion of these disputes were settled by the arbitration boards, and did not therefore reach the final tribunal. The author of the measure, writing in 1896 upon the working of the Act, gave this additional information :—

“Where the practice of an employer in the past has been to work his factory entirely with Union labour it has ordered him to continue to give a preference to competent Unionist applicants for vacant places. When, however, such applicants do not offer themselves the Union is commanded not to object to the engagement of outside men. In other cases, however, where Unionists have failed to prove a past agreement or custom to employ only Union labour, the Court has been satisfied to prohibit the employers from discriminating against Unionists when taking on fresh men.”\*

Whatever may be the shortcomings or limitations of this great measure, it must be judged more by its results than by these defects. Subjected to this fairest of all tests, it has so far justified its position on the statute book of the colony by successfully substituting a peaceful and rational remedy for trade differences for the warfare of strikes and lock-outs.

\* *National Review*, November, 1896.

The report of the Department of Labour for 1897 brings the results of the working of the law down to the present year. These are eminently satisfactory. Strikes have been averted in some of the leading trades and settlements arrived at "without anxiety or inconvenience to the general public," in the language of the official record. A few of the cases given in the report will illustrate the value of the tribunal which disposed of them:—

"The Westport Coal Mining Company cut down the wages of its miners fourpence in the ton a year back. Another reduction of threepence was announced afterwards, with an intimation that dismissal would follow a refusal to accept these terms. The miners brought the case before the Conciliation Board, the award of which was appealed against by the company, the result being the hearing of the case by the Arbitration Court. A most minute inquiry was made into the whole matter—rates of wages elsewhere, conditions of labour, cost of living, etc. A settlement was effected, partly by temporary arrangements, subject to subsequent revision, and by the affirming of certain principles which should be obligatory upon both company and men. Some of these decisions are valuable, as showing the power of equity in industrial disputes when exercised by an impartial body having the mandate of the law behind it.

"One recommends that, 'If work is slack, and the men wish, the company is recommended to distribute the work among the men rather than discharge employees.' Another prescribes, 'That, as regards hewing coal and trucking and tipping, so long as there are sufficient capable men at Denniston out of work, the company shall employ these, either by contract or day-labour, provided that they are willing to contract or work at reasonable rates before the company calls for tenders from outsiders, or employs outsiders.'"

Three other instances of settlement in important trades I will quote direct from the report (pp. 6-7):—

"A difficulty between this association and the Christchurch Operative Boot-makers' Society arose through employers submitting certain printed conditions of employment and a partial statement of wages to the workmen engaged in the trade. The question was also raised as to the employment of men not belonging to trades unions. In 1891 the men had approached the employers, and suggested that a statement should be drawn up acceptable to both sides. A conference was held, and an agreement made. By this agreement the manufacturers of one town, who had not been actively represented at the conference, refused to be bound, and a strike (known as the Auckland strike) ensued, in which the employers were successful. The conference met several times in ensuing years, but were powerless to bring about any general agreement. In 1896, on the matter being brought before the Conciliation Board, it was found that it was expedient to obtain judgment from the Court of Arbitration on certain points before the Board could proceed with the hearing of the case. On 7th July it was therefore laid before the Court of Arbitration; but that Court referred the dispute to the Board on the ground that certain items or subjects could not be separated from the whole, but that the Board must do its best to adjudicate upon the cause without separation of its parts. The Conciliation Board again proceeded with the interrupted evidence, and reported its recommendations as to minimum wage, freedom of contract, etc.; but these recommendations were not accepted by the workmen's union, and

the matter was formally brought into the Arbitration Court on the 12th November, 1896, which gave an award taking effect until the 31st December, 1897. The most important decisions in the award are the rulings that employers shall give preference of employment to the members of the Federated Bootmakers' Union if they are equally qualified with non-members to perform the work required; that where unionists and non-unionists are employed together they shall work in harmony under the same conditions, and having equal pay for equal work; that employers may introduce any machinery they please, and subdivide the labour in connection with such machinery as they deem necessary; that the day shall not exceed a nine-hours day, nor the week forty-eight hours. The overtime pay was noted; a minimum rate of wages was appointed to be fixed from time to time by the General Board of Conciliation, to sit in September of each year; and a scale of proportion setting out the ratio of apprentices to journeymen, etc., in any branch of the boot-making trade was arranged for. The very important matter contained in this judgment is the formal recognition of the trade union by the Court—a recognition which was explained as based upon the value of labour organization in giving the workers corporate rights which they could not possess individually.

“**FEDERATED SEAMEN'S UNION.**—The Wellington Board of Conciliation met on the 18th February to consider a dispute arising between the Federated Seamen's Union and certain shipowners. The subject was the seamen's claim to—(a) a rise in wages; (b) an increase of overtime rates; (c) statutory holidays, such as Good Friday, Christmas Day, etc., on which if work was done it should be paid for as overtime; (d) permission for a representative of the Seamen's Union to visit members on board ship; (e) that union members should have preference in employment. The general line of argument used by the Seamen's Union was in the direction of proving that trade had greatly increased of late years, and therefore that the concessions asked for could in justice be made. The employers brought forward evidence in the direction of proof that, although the volume of trade had increased, competition had also increased and cut down rates of freight till there was small margin of profit. After several days' sitting the Conciliation Board gave its award to the effect that—(a) the wages of seamen and firemen should be raised 10s. per man per month; (b) that overtime should be paid only as formerly, but (c) that Boxing Day should be added to the statutory holidays; (d) that a representative of the union might visit the ships, but not in working hours; (e) that union men should have preference of employment over non-union men when equally capable. This award was not favourably received by the Seamen's Union, and, after several attempts had been made to compromise, the dispute was carried to the Arbitration Court. The Court, however, was informed that its decision was only required in regard to two sections of the Conciliation Board's award—viz., to those relating to preference of employment for unionists, and as to the unionist official having the right to visit ships. Mr. Justice Williams, as judge of the Arbitration Court, gave his award as follows: ‘The employers, in employing labour, shall not discriminate against members of the union. The employers shall not, in the engagement or dismissal of their hands or in the conduct of their business, do anything directly or indirectly for the purpose of injuring the union.’ The award contained a recommendation to steamship owners to allow a union official to go on board their vessels and consult with seamen at reasonable times; this recommendation, however, not being intended to have the force of law, as the judge did not consider that the Court had power to give a person liberty to enter upon a steamship or other property against the will of the owner.”

At Dunedin a dispute arose in the furniture trade owing to the lowering of wages and alleged undue employment of boy labour. The union tried to come to terms with the employers on the basis of agreed conditions as to hours, pay, and the proportion of boy workers to journeymen in the trade. A conference between the parties was held in December, 1896. An agreement was come to whereby eight shillings per day was to be the minimum wage, piecework to be paid for at "log" prices, overtime to be paid for at certain rates, etc. Most of the employers accepted the agreement, but a minority refused. The matter was then taken before the Conciliation Board, when the following award was made and accepted all round, for a term of one year, so as to test its workable fairness:—"The reductions on account of machinery were not to exceed 20 per cent. of the 'log' prices; the clause relating to the number of apprentices should be altered so that those now in work should not be excepted from the three-to-one ratio of journeymen and apprentices. If any employer had apprentices in excess of this ratio he might retain them by paying them 'log' prices." This award became law for an experimental year. It is manifest, however, that the powers of the Act will be equal to the task of settling whatever subsequent differences may arise, and to the satisfaction of both sides.



## CHAPTER LXIX.

### THE STORY OF THE COLONIZATION OF NEW ZEALAND

THE story of the colonization of New Zealand is virtually a history of a contest between British settlers and Maoris for the possession of the land. The fight on the one side was as sordid and as unscrupulous as the greed of civilization could make it. On the other, the natives exhibited many of the very best qualities of a brave race, but not without occasionally resorting to some of the worst customs of their savage nature. They clung to their land, they fought and died for it, and showed on many a battlefield a heroism and a virtue which put to shame the unprincipled acts of the white land-grabbers. To those of my readers who are not familiar with the story of the stirring Maori wars it will be of some interest to learn that the commencement of the trouble which led to these sanguinary conflicts was a scheme of filibustering landlordism, planned by the same Mr. Gibbon Wakefield who had ten years previously attempted to found a land-owning Utopia in South Australia, as related in Part II., pp. 42-43.

Mr. Wakefield and his associates were a little more successful in New Zealand, but not until thousands of settlers and Maori lives, and three or four millions of public money, had been expended as a consequence. A few facts relating to the cause of the land wars thus provoked may be found to have some bearing upon the present-day changes in the land system of New Zealand.

A few years after the collapse of the land bubble at Adelaide, Mr. Wakefield, Lord Durham, and others organized a similar company or association for the acquisition of land in New Zealand. Land was to be "bought" from the natives and resold to settlers, and, as in the case of the South Australian scheme, some of the profits thus "earned" were to be expended in promoting the emigration of suitable workers from Great Britain. These were to be an economic agency for the

creation of land values for the profit of London speculators. The capital of the company was £400,000, in shares of £100. One-fourth of this was subscribed, and one hundred thousand acres of land in the distant islands were "sold" forthwith before a foot of soil had been purchased, or even stolen, from the Maoris! This dishonest transaction, and the ruin which had overtaken those who went into Mr. Wakefield's previous Australian venture, induced the government of the day to interfere, as they thought in time, with plans and policies of their own. This they did, but not soon enough, by sending one Captain Hobson on an expedition to New Zealand to proclaim it a British colony, and arrange a treaty with the natives which should afford them some protection in their lands in return for a probable acceptance by them of the sovereignty of Queen Victoria. This counter-scheme of the government was carried out, and in due course Governor Hobson reached the distant country, and succeeded in obtaining the assent of a large number of Maori chiefs to the terms of what is known as the Treaty of Waitangi. In this document the Maoris were assured that the acceptance of the government of Her Majesty would mean "the full, exclusive, and undisturbed possession of their land, estates, forests, and fisheries, and other properties which they may individually or collectively possess," would be secured to them, so long as they wished to retain possession of the same. The solemn promise thus made was shamefully broken, as all such "charter" or "colonizing" promises are. It must be said, however, in justice to Captain Hobson, who was a most conscientious officer and honourable man, that it is manifest from his acts and despatches he did his best, until hounded to his grave by Wakefield's press supporters in London, to keep his word and good faith with the natives. Some of his successors were of another stamp, and it was their breach of faith, and especially the doings of the agents of the New Zealand Land Company, which precipitated the disastrous wars that followed.

The action of the government, thus briefly related, did not prevent the Wakefield scheme going forward. An expedition had been fitted out with a brother of Mr. Wakefield's in command, and in a vessel named *The Tory* the filibusterers set sail for the scene of operations. Colonel Wakefield, on reaching Cook's Straits, fell in with a Maori Pakeha, named Barrett, who pretended to have a knowledge of the native language, and, under the guidance of this Irishman, the present

site of the city of Wellington and all the country around was "purchased" from Maoris who claimed to be the owners. Similar "purchases" were made in the Middle Island, until Colonel Wakefield was able to send word home that for articles valued at nine thousand pounds "he had bought as much land as equalled the area of the whole of Ireland." These "purchases" were of the most transparently bogus character, as afterwards transpired.

Meanwhile New Zealand had been proclaimed a colony. The charter creating a Legislative and Executive Council was signed by the Queen in 1840. It declared that the three islands, the North, Middle, and Stewart Islands, forming New Zealand, should be known respectively as "New Ulster, New Munster, and New Leinster." Governor Hobson fixed upon Auckland as the seat of his government, and thereby aroused all the fury of the Port Nicholson settlers, and that of the London purchasers of "lots" in the capital that was to be. They assailed him in the most violent manner, and literally persecuted him to an untimely death. His defence of his action, in a despatch to the Colonial Secretary in May 1841, reveals at one and the same time the upright and honourable nature of the man and the base and truculent motives of his land-grabbing enemies. He died shortly afterwards, and lies buried in Auckland. The Maori chiefs were so deeply impressed with his love of justice and his fairness towards them that they forwarded a petition to the Queen, requesting her to send out a man who would possess similar qualities to those of Captain Hobson. A rare testimony indeed from a fighting race to the high character of a colonizing governor, repeated in other ways in later years to a far abler man and more noted governor, statesman, and politician, Sir George Grey.

In the business zeal of the agents of the Wakefield Company they claimed to have "purchased" the Wairau Valley from a native chief. It turned out that this chief had no more right to the valley in question than any other Maori. But this trifling flaw in the title did not deter the company from asserting their rights over it. They sent men from Wellington to survey the land. The natives looked on, warning the intruders that the land was theirs and to leave it alone. They asserted their claims to their own property by pulling up the surveyor's pegs and burning them. This outrage on "law and order" incensed the company's officers at Wellington. They resolved upon the arrest of the chief Rauparaha, who had been guilty of this

"crime," and set forth with a force of police and volunteers to vindicate the majesty of the Wakefield land-grabbing law. A nephew of Mr. Gibbon Wakefield commanded the punitive force. He made his way to where the offending Maoris were encamped, and, along with one of the company's magistrates, proceeded to arrest the culprit Rauparaha in the presence of his people. The chief, with great coolness and an evident desire to avoid a conflict, offered to leave the whole matter in dispute to the sole decision of the English Land Commissioner. Wakefield would have none of such arbitration. He could have no parley with a savage. His business was to capture the chief, and calling out, "Englishmen, follow me!" he rushed at the Maori leader. The first shot fired by the Wakefield gang killed the daughter of Rauparaha, an innocent spectator, and the wife of a young chief. The natives stood their ground, returning the fire of their assailants, whereupon the volunteers fled, and Wakefield and his force surrendered to Rauparaha. Then occurred the historic "Wairau massacre," which brought upon the natives the full force of Imperial punishment and the forfeiture of nearly all their lands. The killing of Wakefield and his party, after their surrender, was of course a most reprehensible act. But, when it is borne in mind that Governor Fitzroy afterwards held, and declared, that the Wakefield "purchase" of the Wairau valley was no purchase at all; taking also into account the killing of the wife of the young chief and the daughter of the head of the Wairau Maoris; it must, I think, be admitted by all fair-minded critics that the land-grabbers had brought it all upon themselves. This was the real beginning of all the Maori wars. Similar instances of unscrupulous scheming and bad faith led to other outbreaks elsewhere, which were only suppressed in a twenty years' struggle at a great cost of life on both sides, and of millions of money in addition on the side of the taxpayers.

The Wakefield Company was deprived of its charter in 1850, but obtained a large grant of public money from Parliament. No account has ever been published of its income or expenditure. The cities of Wellington and Nelson, and I think New Plymouth, all flourishing centres, were founded by its efforts, and the price of the land thus disposed of must have brought in a large revenue. The land-grabbing from the Maoris did not cease with the death of the Wakefield Company. The government of the colony by a nominated council was simply an administration of settlers who were as hungry for the land of the natives as the speculators in London. Bogus purchasing went on, native revolts followed, until,

finally, the Maori resistance to confiscation was crushed by an overwhelming force, amounting to some 20,000 soldiers. Then began a policy of passive resistance, when physical force had failed to arrest the action of the plundering Pakehas. Te Whiti, who was called the "Maori Land Leaguer," initiated his policy in 1877 of breaking bad laws in the hope that justice, in fair ones, might follow. His agitation was co-temporary with that of the Land League movement. Hundreds of Maoris in the Waimati district were arrested for ploughing lands which had been bought by settlers from the government. Te Whiti claimed that this land had not been sold by the Maoris, and that the seizure of it was a violation of the solemn pledge made by Governor Hobson in the Queen's name, in the treaty of Waitangi. The Waimati plains were settled upon by Maoris in the conviction that they were reservations and, as such, could not be confiscated. But this was only the contention of impotent truth and weak justice. The law of the land-grabber cares nothing about these arguments. The land of the plains was rich, and that declared it to be white man's property. Any resistance to this indisputable right must be a violation of law and order. Te Whiti could not see it in that light, and he persisted in his policy of contesting by organized trespass the right of Maori occupancy, but without violence. Some of the leading politicians in the New Zealand Parliament were shamed into sympathy with Te Whiti; and, as a consequence, a proposal was made which would give forty or fifty thousand acres of the disputed territory to the Maoris of the district, and the bulk of it to the speculators who had purchased it from the government. Te Whiti refused these terms, so one day he and hundreds of his followers were arrested and walked off to prison. A trial was denied them, for the reason that there was no real case against them, and, to show that the resources of land-grabbing meanness were not exhausted, a bill was passed through the Legislature resembling the "Coercion Act," which enabled Mr. Forster to imprison without trial a thousand Irish Land Leaguers just about the same period. Te Whiti and his followers were sent to prison without indictment or conviction, and kept there until 1882. They were then released and sent to the circumscribed reserves referred to above, where they settled down, and where most of them are found to-day.

A small portion of the land of New Zealand is still in the hands of its original owners, thanks alone to the splendid resistance which they made against its entire confiscation. They fought for the tribal or national right to the soil against individual



ownership or land-grabbing. They were beaten by overwhelming forces, but the principle underlying their brave struggle was not crushed. It survived and, in turn, conquered the white land-grabber. It is not, therefore, without significance, and perhaps a useful moral, to find an Irish Premier of New Zealand, aided chiefly by a Celtic Highlander—both of whom knew something of Irish and Scottish landlordism—instrumental a few years ago in moulding the present land laws of the colony on the broad, just, and rational principle of "the land of a country for the people of the country, and not for any class."

## CHAPTER LXX.

### NEW ZEALAND LAND LAWS

**I**N the official publication of the New Zealand government, the *Year Book* for 1896, dealing with the progress of the colony, the following statements on the existing land system are found in an able article contributed to the volume by the Surveyor-General of Crown Lands, Mr. S. Percy Smith, F.R.G.S. :—

“The distinguishing features of the present land system are the outcome of ideas which have been gradually coming to maturity for some years past in this colony. These features involve the principle of state-ownership of the soil, with a perpetual tenancy in the occupier. This, whatever may be the difference in detail, is the prevailing characteristic of the several systems under which land may now be selected.” (p. 289.)

“The values placed on the Crown lands are, as a rule, low, for the state does not so much seek to raise a revenue directly therefrom as to encourage the occupation of the lands by the people. This secures indirectly an increased revenue, besides other advantages resulting from a numerous rural population. Underlying the whole of the New Zealand land system is a further application of the principle of ‘the land for the people,’ namely, the restriction in area which any man may hold. This subject has been forced upon the attention of the Legislature by defects in former systems, under which one individual with means at his command could appropriate large areas, to the exclusion of his poorer fellow-settlers.” (p. 290)

The credit for this reform in the New Zealand land laws belongs mainly to the late Mr. Ballance, son of an Ulster tenant farmer, and to Mr. John McKenzie, son of a Highland crofter, Minister of Lands and Agriculture in the present government of the colony, aided by Mr. Rolleston and other land reformers. The Hon. W. P. Reeves, writing previous to his appointment as Agent-General for New Zealand in London, says of Mr. Ballance :—

“John Ballance was a journalist, but as the son of a north of Ireland farmer, he knew country life in its working side. His views on the land question were not therefore mere theories, but part of his life and belief. Not only was land monopoly in every form hateful to him, not only had he adopted and advocated state tenancy, as opposed to freehold, but his earnest belief in, and extension of, what are known as village settlements had made him, amongst New Zealand workmen, the most popular Lands Minister of

the time. In Ballance and his followers in 1890 New Zealand Labour organizations found a ready-made political party from which they had much to hope. With it, therefore, they threw in their lot. The result showed the power of Unionism and of one-man-one-vote. In New Zealand all the elections for the House of Representatives take place on one day. In 1890 the day was the 15th December. On the 6th of that month it was clear enough that John Ballance would be the colony's next Premier. After a short delay his opponents yielded, and on the 24th of January, 1891, he took office."\*

The principles of land reform associated with the labours of Mr. Ballance and Mr. McKenzie were continued as an essential part of the policy and programme of the Seddon ministry, which succeeded that described by Mr. Reeves, and is at present in power. These just and rational land laws have come to stay. No party exists at present in New Zealand that demands their repeal. The evils of land monopoly are now as universally recognized in the colony as are the widespread benefits which have sprung out of the policy of "back to the land"—the putting of labour on to the soil. Large estates are being broken up into homestead holdings; village settlements, advocated by Mr. Ballance and Mr. Rolleston a dozen years ago, have been successfully tried since 1892, as the following interesting figures will show:—

Number of settlements in the colony . . . . .	151
Number of original settlers . . . . .	1987
Original settlers now remaining . . . . .	1200
Number of present settlers . . . . .	1488
Number settled on the land, including wives and families . . . . .	4867
Total area held (acres) . . . . .	35,256
Average area to each settler (acres) . . . . .	23½
Area laid down in pasture or cultivated (acres) . . . . .	16,165
Amount advanced for buildings, bush-felling, grassing, etc., from the commencement of the system to 31st March, 1896 . . . . .	£25,878
Advances repaid . . . . .	£565
Annual rent and interest . . . . .	£5074
Amount received as rent and interest for year ending 31st March, 1896 . . . . .	£4407
Total amount received from the commencement of the system to 31st March, 1896 . . . . .	£22,112
Arrears of rent and interest . . . . .	£2254
Value of improvements now on the land . . . . .	£101,922 †

The land of these settlements is leased to the settlers at a rent of four per cent. on a minimum capital value of ten shillings per

\* *National Review*, August, 1896.

† *New Zealand Year Book for 1896*, pp. 295, 296.

acre. Not the least hopeful feature of this popular land system is the inclusion of a homestead law which secures the lease and the interest therein from liability for a tenant's debt. This principle is being adopted in other colonies. It is an indispensable safeguard. It protects the HOME of the small farmer and secures shelter for the family against either the accidents of life or the New Zealand equivalents of the gombeen-man. It does more: it prevents the social crime of Eviction, and if the sons of the Irish tenant and the Highland crofter, who were instrumental in making these changes in the land system of their adopted country, did no more than embody this great and humane principle in the laws of New Zealand, their names would deserve to be remembered with gratitude by their respective fellow-countrymen at both ends of the earth.

The access of labour to the land is made not only easy, but tempting, by the wise provisions of the New Zealand land system. To the foregoing favourable conditions are added the equally advantageous one of state advances, at low interest, for the clearing of the soil and the equipment of holdings. Thus, with perpetuity of lease, giving fixity of tenure; a rent of four per cent. on a ten shillings capital value per acre; with the interest in the lease secured, in the case of village settlements, against creditors, and with state advances, such as referred to, the desire for acquiring freehold property in farming land has been practically killed. The interest is secured and improvements are free from taxation to the land worker, while the "landlordism" of the soil that still exists is in the hands of the state and not in those of any individual. No freehold system that could be devised can offer better advantages. The capital which a purchasing tenant would have to part with, if he bought out the land, can be applied, under the state-leasehold plan, to the development of it, in absolute security against that landlord usury which seizes, in Ireland, upon every penny of the farmer's profits, and often upon his capital as well, as the spoil of the land-grabbing system. In one country the land is given, on the easiest possible terms, to Labour; in the other it is still held, under impoverishing conditions for the tenant, in the iron grip of Rent. This makes all the difference between a poor and a prosperous agricultural country. Mr. Seddon told me in Wellington that, "thanks to our land laws, there is not a man, woman, or child within the borders of New Zealand in want of bread and butter, while we will soon successfully solve the problem of the unemployed." This was a proud and a true boast. And what of the land

of Rent and Evictions, as a contrast? A hundred acres of splendid land, in one country, at a rent under a shilling an acre a year, with fixity of tenure and direct state loans; ten acres of reclaimed bog, in my native county of Mayo, paying a "fair rent" of fifteen shillings or a pound per acre, with state assistance also, it is true, but invariably in the shape of evicting forces and the workhouse.

The system of advances by government loan to settlers and tenants is worked under a special Act, passed in 1894. A state capital fund for this purpose has been created, by means of a public loan, issued at the rate of three per cent. A sum of one million and a half has already been invested in this loan by the people of the colony, and power under the Act remains to add as much more to the fund whenever it is required. Sufficient interest is charged to the borrower to cover all risk and to ensure the repayment of the principal within a specified number of years. The public revenue is, therefore, free from any burthen with regard to these advances for land labour, while the special fund out of which they are made is secured against loss through the government guarantee of solvent administration. A special office has been created under this Act for the carrying out of the intentions of the Legislature. The system is self-supporting, and the general public get all the indirect advantage of an increasing agricultural community without a penny of taxation being levied in consequence.

Land-value taxation has made considerable progress in New Zealand. Mr. Ballance was a land nationalizer, but not a "Single Taxer." He wanted to place all the labour possible upon the land on the most encouraging terms and conditions, so as to promote, at one and the same time, the industrial independence of the land worker and the economic good of the entire community. The purpose of the "Single Tax" is to reach the same result, but by an indirect way, and this way is believed by many land nationalizers to be the way of most resistance. So, at least, thought those land reformers who aided Mr. Ballance in his labours to substitute state tenancy with fixity of tenure for freehold occupation. In 1891 the then existing property tax was abolished, and a dual tax substituted; one on unimproved land values and land mortgages, and the other an income tax upon miscellaneous property. These sources of public revenue have yielded, so far, a sum about equal to that formerly gathered by the old taxation. There is also a graduated land tax, and one on absentee owners. These are small, however, and add little,



as yet, to the revenue. The ordinary tax on land is at the rate of one penny in the £, and the graduated additional tax begins at a value of £5,000, with  $\frac{3}{8}$ th of a penny on the unimproved value, rising to twopence in the £ where the same kind of value is estimated at £200,000 or over. The total land tax of the colony varies annually. It averages about £280,000, as against the total tax from incomes which will amount to about £95,000—land values thus paying nearly 300 per cent. more than the ordinary incomes of the country.

Owners of land subject to the land tax are allowed to deduct the amount of registered mortgages on their property from the unimproved value. The mortgagees have to pay the tax upon the amounts thus exempted. A twenty per cent. addition to the graduated land tax is levied upon the property of absentee landlords who resided out of New Zealand for three years previous to the passing of the Act of 1891 referred to. People assessed on their land are entitled to demand a new assessment any time before the end of the financial year, and such request must be complied with. Objections can be taken to the assessment thus made, and the matter can be referred to competent (non-official) authorities residing near the property. Provision is made in the law, also, whereby an owner who thinks the amount for which he is assessed to be too large, can call upon the Commissioner either to lessen the amount on which the tax has to be paid, or to buy the property at the capital value represented by the imposed tax. Conversely, if the Commissioner believes the tax to be under that which the land ought to pay, he can demand of the owner the payment of an increased assessment, or the sale of the property to the government at a price 10 per cent. above the owner's estimated value, should the state desire to acquire the land.

These are the main features of the changes which have been introduced into the New Zealand land laws during the past seven years, as set forth with many more interesting particulars and details in the various printed matter issued by the government. They show a wise courage in their scope and purpose, dealing leniently with existing personal interests, but rightly helping, by the direct encouragement of the state, a transition from the system of private property in land to that of a state tenancy under the most favourable terms and conditions possible for Labour. The land of the country (that, at least, which has not already been alienated) is offered to industry at a nominal rent, but without any encouragement to the tenant to become a little

landlord in turn. This evil is wisely sought to be averted from the future of the colony by the operation of this land law, and both present land workers and future taxpayers are protected (to the extent at least of the powers of the new land system) against those usurious landlords once described by Mr. Chamberlain as those "who toil not, neither do they spin," but who, in Ireland and in Great Britain, manage, nevertheless, to levy a class rent-tax of over a hundred millions a year upon the wealth-creating labour and enterprise of the British and Irish peoples.

The total acreage of the land of New Zealand, in round figures, is 66,000,000. About 21,000,000 acres have been alienated, leaving 45,000,000 acres of Crown land still the property of the state. Land equalling the area of Ireland has been sold, grabbed, or otherwise disposed of since the country was annexed to the British Empire; but an area almost as large as that of England is still in the hands of the state, while power is taken in the Ballance land laws to buy back what has been parted with if it is deemed necessary to do so for the public good. This can be done under the provisions of a law passed in 1892, called "The Land for Settlement Act." This measure was further amended in 1894 and 1896, so as to facilitate the planting of working men on the good land which might be repurchased from the owners of sheep runs or company proprietors. Under these laws advances are made to "successful applicants for allotments in aid of the cost of fencing and planting the same, building dwelling-houses thereon, and special provisions as to allotments for workmen's homes, the areas of which must not exceed three acres."

The general working of the Land for Settlement Acts is thus described in the official *Year Book* for 1896, p. 293:—

"The Land for Settlement Act authorized the purchase from private individuals of suitable properties for subdivision into small farms not exceeding 320 acres in extent. Under the provisions of this and the amending Acts several properties have been acquired, and subsequently divided into small farms and leased in perpetuity at a 5 per cent. rental on a capital value fixed at a sufficient rate to cover first cost, together with survey, administration, and roads (if required). The process of acquisition is as follows: Whenever a property is offered to the government, if it is so situated as to meet the object of the Act, a report on it is obtained by a qualified government officer, and, should his report be favourable, the question of purchase is then referred to a Board of Land Purchase Commissioners, composed of the inspector, who is the permanent chairman, three other government officers, and a member of the local Land Board, whose training and duties qualify them to advise the government as to whether the purchase is a suitable one, and as to the price which should be given for the property. It is only on the advice of this

Board that the government acts. In nearly all cases the properties acquired have been improved farms, situated in settled districts, where the tenants have some chance of obtaining employment in the vicinity. The amount which may be expended per annum under the Act of 1892 is £50,000; but the Act of 1894 extended this amount to £250,000, and it also provided that the limit of land which might be selected should be the same as under 'The Land Act, 1892.' The Act also provides for the exchange of high-lying pastoral Crown lands for low-lying agricultural lands suitable for small holdings. A new feature was introduced into the Act of 1894—namely, the power of compulsory taking of lands in cases where the Board could not agree with the owner as to price, etc., and where the Governor in Council decides that the possession of the land for purposes of subdivision is otherwise desirable. The amount payable to the owner is decided by a Compensation Court with full powers. Only one property has hitherto been acquired compulsorily, and that has since been disposed of on satisfactory terms. Up to the 31st March, 1896, nineteen estates had been purchased, at a cost of over £209,559, which covered an area of 60,074 acres. At the same date there were living on those estates which had been subdivided and selected 643 persons, in the place of the few who had held these places formerly."

## CHAPTER LXXI.

### AMONG THE MAORIS

NO part of New Zealand is more replete with historic incident or richer in natural attractiveness than the country lying north and north-east from the capital. It comprises the districts in which the principal Maori wars were waged. The majority of the natives who did not succumb to rifles or rum are found mainly between the Wanganui and the boundaries of the province of Auckland, a region known as "the King Country." They have their own government and customs guaranteed them, and are not now interfered with in any way; being, in fact, largely, if not wholly, exempt from the ordinary taxation of the colony. Schools have been established among them, and from a return dealing with the cost of native education it is shown that some 2000 Maori children attend these schools, and cost the state about £12,000 in teachers' salaries and incidental expenditure every year.

For purposes of representation in the Legislature the Maori population is divided into four constituencies, the franchise being the same for both sexes, as among the white colonists. Out of an estimated Maori population of 40,000, including half-castes, over 11,000 recorded their votes in the general election of 1893; 4000 of these voters being supposed to be Maori women! No registration of Maori voters is required by law. Every adult over twenty-one has the right to vote, and any male having that solitary qualification is entitled to represent any of the four Maori Parliamentary districts, but no other. In the latest *Year Book* issued by the New Zealand government the names of the Maori M.H.R.'s are given as Hone Heke (northern district), Tame Parata (southern), Wi Pere (eastern), and Ropata Te Ao (western).

I regret the time at my disposal when at Wellington did not allow of a tour through the Maori districts, or of a visit to the

picturesque country lying between the Wanganui and Waikato rivers along the west coast. From all accounts I missed some of the most beautiful scenery in the colony, as well as an interesting experience of native manners and customs.

It was my intention when planning my tour in New Zealand to visit the Wanganui river district in order to see the convent at Jerusalem, where there are a number of brave Irish nuns labouring for religion and charity among the Maoris. The Mother Superior, Madame Aubert, had kindly invited me to pay them a visit and learn something about their work for the natives, and it was with keen regret I found myself unable to go up "the New Zealand Rhine," as the Wanganui is claimed to be, and see the good Sisters at their labours. Mother Aubert honoured me with a visit at Napier after learning that the date of my departure from Auckland to Samoa would not allow of the journey to Jerusalem. I found her a wonderfully bright and cheerful little woman, full of enthusiasm in the cause of humanity, and very proud of being associated with "the best Catholics in the world, the Irish nuns," in the mission of charity and religion. The following is a summary of the origin, aim, and work of the convent at Jerusalem as given me in an interview by the Mother Superior:—

"All our Sisters at Jerusalem are Irish, or colonial born from the same stock. We are fourteen in number. We were established on the Wanganui river to teach and look after the Maoris. There were no European residents there when we began our little mission among the natives. Our first years were very trying, living as we had to do in the wilds of an immense district, and it is just a wonder how we got on. I suppose our Lady of Compassion had pity on us, and we were thus enabled to surmount our great difficulties. The aim of our institution is works of charity in their widest acceptance. From our secluded home we make inroads into the civilized parts to carry away with us all we can of the victims of misery and vice. Ill-fated children, doomed to moral perdition by dissolute parents, crippled, blind, or children otherwise afflicted, having no adequate care or attention, we rescue from hopeless or helpless surroundings. We receive applications from every part of the country and from people of all denominations, but, unfortunately, we are obliged to refuse many for want of means and accommodation. The class of children we take in are not supported by government help or by charitable-aid boards. We receive, them, however, without fee or reward. Most satisfactory results have already been obtained from our humble efforts, and with God's blessing will go on increasing. It was the heart-



breaking spectacle of so much moral and physical misery, even in this beautiful and rich land, and the necessity of raising some means of lessening it, that induced me to put my remedies on the market four years ago."

These herbal medicines of Mother Aubert's are in much demand in other colonies as well as in New Zealand, and the income from their sale helps the enthusiastic little French woman to carry on her Good Samaritan work on the Wanganui. The knowledge of the curative properties of these native herbs and roots was derived by her from the Maoris, and all the sick natives on or near the beautiful river near which the convent at Jerusalem stands come to Mother Aubert to be cured of their ills and aches. Her medicines are all named in the Maori language. There is "Wanena," for cuts and bruises; "Paramo," for all stomach troubles; "Marupa," for the throat and bronchial ailments; and "Natanata," "Karana," and others for the manifold ailments of human nature. Mother Aubert is, I believe, a relative of M. Casimir-Périer, late President of the French Republic.

The country between Wellington and Napier, a distance of some 200 miles, is of a very varied character, both as to soil and scenery. Bush, clearances, and cultivation are met with until Palmerston is reached, when you find yourself in a rich farming region. A fellow-traveller who joined my train here told me that he had seen a Maori and wife promenading in that pretty-looking town with a *white* girl wheeling the perambulator, in which the young Maori hopeful was also taking an airing! This incident raised Palmerston North very high in my esteem. Some of the natives make good farmers and contract steady, industrious habits. These are chiefly those who have lived among the Europeans since the wars ended, and have learned some of the good, along with the bad, qualities of the Pakehas. We passed a good many Maori pahs between Palmerston and Waipawa. This last place is an exclusive Maori village. It wore a clean and orderly look, which was most pleasing to note. No ordinary English village would surpass the neatness of the dwellings or the general air of comfort and quietness which seemed to prevail, with children well clad, healthy-looking, and happy, playing around as in any white village.

From here on to the capital of Hawke's Bay the land is reputed to be the richest in grasses of any part of the antipodes. It recalled the best grass lands of County Meath. In most of the pasture lands of Australia one sheep is counted enough for one acre, sometimes too much. In this part of New Zealand the

pasture is so rich that ten sheep to an acre are not thought too many. The pity of it is that it is not a case of one man to the acre instead of ten sheep, as the land is of such an admirable quality that it could easily support even a population so numerous. You see it all, however, given over to wool and meat growing until Hastings is reached, and you get within the radius of the capital of the province and find cultivation and farming invading, to some extent, the dominion of the squatter.

Napier is a flourishing little city with some 12,000 people, counting Hastings and other adjoining townships. My stay there was too short for a full observation of a place which must hold literature in the very highest esteem, if one has to judge of the culture of the citizens by the nomenclature of their main streets. All the best-known English poets and writers salute you in their names from the corners of the chief thoroughfares. This is surely a more intelligent and praiseworthy custom than that of perpetuating the memories of fameless monarchs in the same manner, and the city fathers who hit upon this enlightened plan for this New Zealand Boston deserve to have their memories preserved and honoured as an example for the new cities of the future. Napier has a bright and busy appearance. Its suburban residences, in style and surroundings, suggest a wealthy community. The land in the locality and for a wide district outside it is, I was told, the richest in the colony. Judging from the fine grassy pastures which are seen as you approach the city from the south, the boast is no mere "booming" claim of superiority, but a well-founded description of the natural wealth of the soil in the Hawke's Bay region.

The town lies along a coast which is open to very rough seas in stormy seasons. The waves leap over an ineffectual breakwater that attempts to protect the port; at least they did so to some purpose while compelling our ship to wait a whole day for calmer weather inside the drenched and helpless harbour. Much public money has been expended on this barrier against the (sometimes angry) Pacific, and a continuance of the generous outlay will, in time, secure safe and convenient harbourage where it is greatly needed for the growing trade of a very important district of the colony.

From Napier to Auckland my contemplated route lay in a coaching tour right across the North Island, as in the journey from Christchurch to Greymouth. Rotorua and the marvellous phenomena of the geyser and boiling-lake region were to be seen, and to form subjects for a chapter in these antipodean sketches.

But man proposes and the rain disposes of travelling plans and programmes in New Zealand. A storm came up during my too brief stay at Napier and flooded the roads over which my desires and Napier's most famed "whip" and best horses were to carry me, making a journey that way and a sailing home from Auckland on a certain date impossible. I had, therefore, to abandon an intended trip to see some of the most extraordinary features and freaks of nature to be found in any part of the world. What was to have been, in so doing, another enjoyable experience of New Zealand by road and river, had to be turned into a prosaic sea voyage, round a couple of hundred miles of coast, in anything but pleasant weather.

No matter how you reach Auckland, you are captivated at once by the unparalleled charms of its situation. You feel that Hobart, Naples, Killiney Hill, Colombo, and Wellington are most emphatically eclipsed, in loveliness of location, when once you find yourself standing on Eden Hill, and looking out upon the scene of absolutely unrivalled beauty that spreads itself before you. There is not a single element wanting, not a feature of the beautiful in nature's landscape picture-painting and framing omitted in the perfect panorama that claims your admiration. Mount Eden, an extinct volcano, rises over the city from a suburban position five or six hundred feet above the level of the harbour, and commands an uninterrupted view of city, seas, bays, islands, headlands, and distant mountains. And what a panorama it is! Turn which way you please to any point of the compass and your vision is still within the magic circle of Auckland's matchless scenic position. You are also so comparatively near all the enchanting views that each can be easily seen and enjoyed as perfect parts of a widely varied, captivating whole.

It is here where Auckland possesses what even Sydney and Hobart want in order to complete the landscape perfection of their otherwise unsurpassed sites. Auckland sits enthroned upon hills which overlook two seas, and gazes out upon the island-studded surface of one of the most commodious harbours, and one of the most beautiful, in the world. With the exception of two narrow necks of land west and south of the city's site, each only a few miles wide, Auckland would stand on an island between the ocean on both sides of New Zealand; as the sea on the west coast comes in through Manukau Harbour, and would mingle with the waters of Hauraki Gulf, but for the slender connecting links of land referred to. In this peerless position Auckland is surrounded with the most lavish luxuriance of all that appeals

to our love of what is truly sublime and inimitable in nature. She is not in herself the Queen of Australasian cities, but she occupies the throne from which, at some future day, a city entitled to that claim will, in becoming worthy of its superb situation, outstrip her antipodean sisters in the race for that position and honour.

In streets, buildings, and suburbs Auckland ranks easily as one of the seven or eight leading cities of Australasia. In population she is, counting suburbs, I believe, near the first in her own colony. She can boast of some splendid thoroughfares, and of many very fine public edifices. Queen Street, in its many handsome structures, will remind you, to some extent, of Collins Street, Melbourne, or King William Street, in Adelaide. The city has the great advantage, like Hobart and Wellington, of deep water in the harbour, and quite close to the centre of the busiest portion of the town, allowing the largest vessels to berth themselves alongside the fine and commodious Queen Street wharf. Warehouses of palatial appearance, business emporiums, hotels, and public offices are all in keeping with the general taste for architectural display which is seen in the centre of the city. In its suburbs Auckland is especially favoured, having so many elevated positions on which villas and other pretty residences are perched, overlooking all the varied life, colour, and beauty of the bay.

In public parks, reserves, and recreation grounds there are evidences of a wise and broad-minded municipal provision for the health and general welfare of the people. In hospitals and the other necessary institutions of a large city it is also well provided, while in churches, too, it is ahead of Wellington and not far behind Dunedin and Christchurch. The Catholic Cathedral is not as handsome as that of Dunedin, but it occupies a more commanding position than any other church in Auckland, and is a striking landmark from the sea.

The combined Free Library and Public Art Gallery is a just boast with Aucklanders. It is the best and most complete institution of its kind in New Zealand. Some of its attractive possessions are the gift of the all-round, most deservedly popular colonist the colony has yet had: governor, statesman, reformer, premier, and politician, Sir George Grey. The building is in every way worthy of its instructive and many remarkable curiosities, and the institution itself, in all its equipment, is in keeping with the progressive spirit, municipal and national, which distinguishes the people of a highly favoured city.



Auckland is the seat of a large number of manufacturing industries, and counts a comparatively big working-class element among its population. Like all the workers I saw in New Zealand, they wear the looks of men and women who are well contented with their superior social condition and unequalled labour laws, as well they may. In this respect there are no workers more favoured in the world of industry to-day, because no other government in any civilized country has thrown a more complete legal shield around the health, protection, and interests of its wage-earners than that of this enlightened colony. And this has been accomplished without exciting, to any great extent, the fears, real or counterfeited, with which vested interests in other lands oppose and assail all the state socialism which is not directly to the advantage of capital. The progressive laws of New Zealand are now accepted by almost all classes as proofs of their country's courageous justice. They are also seen to be effective barriers against social unrest and the wasteful anarchical methods of industrial warfare that are sometimes necessary, though always deplorable, where organized labour feels itself compelled to make such war in order to obtain better pay for its exertions, or more just or more humane conditions in its employment. Industrial peace, thus secured, is surely worth the sacrifice of a prejudice, which is about the only penalty inflicted upon the opponents of such labour legislation as that now included in New Zealand laws.

The gold mines of the Auckland district rank third in productiveness in the colony. They have yielded altogether about 2,000,000 ounces from the start. It is all quartz mining, both at the Thames, Coromandel, and Ohinemuri mines. The ore is all refractory, and whatever development has been done so far has had to be carried on under difficulties and much discouragement. Water is an obstinate hindrance in the Thames district in all mines below a three or four hundred feet level; but from what I learned of the character and extent of the mining prospects of the country when at Auckland, and in conversation with miners in other parts of New Zealand, I could gather that paying stone will be found in the Thames district in abundance whenever the water obstacle is successfully faced. The character of some of the quartz mined at Ohinemuri may be estimated from the figures published by the government in 1895, which showed that from 31,220 tons of stone got out in the year 1894-5, £92,900 worth of gold was taken, plus £17,600 more from the tailings. Miners in Victoria and South Africa will learn with no little surprise that



it costs no less than £4 10s. to extract the gold from a ton of stone, counting all the incidental outlay on the working of a mine, in Ohinemuri county. There is a monopoly of the cyanide method of treatment in the hands of a single company, and I was informed that the terms exacted by the farmers of the patent were prohibitive, and tended to give a serious set-back to the otherwise very promising prospects of these fields. There has been some legal modification of the rights exercised by the company in question since I was in Auckland, and there may, in consequence of this, be more liberal rates allowed at present to mine owners. The difference between the results obtained with and without this process in the treatment of stone in these goldfields is represented by ninety per cent. and sixty respectively. The number of miners employed in the Auckland district doubled between the years 1894-5 and 1895-6, and are given in the latest return as 3480. Coromandel and Thames counties are, in part, visible from the city of Auckland, being on the opposite side of the southern portion of Hauraki Gulf. Ohinemuri is a small county south of and adjoining Thames county. A line of railway runs through it, parallel with the Thames river. A great portion of this country has not been prospected, and the belief obtains that when it is thoroughly gone over it will be found, from the indications and outcrops of some portions of it, to be a most promising field for mining enterprise and development.

## CHAPTER LXXII.

### SUMMARY OF IMPRESSIONS OF NEW ZEALAND

IT is no easy task to sum up one's impressions of New Zealand in parting with it in these necessarily brief sketches of what I saw and learned while travelling from one extremity of it to the other. It is a country which you leave regretting you have not seen more of it, and resolving to make amends in this respect by another and a longer visit. It is a country blessed with almost everything that can make an industrious people envied by even those of the most favoured of European nations. To begin with, it is the healthiest climate in the whole world. The mean annual temperature during the four seasons is: 55° in spring, 63° in summer, 57° in autumn, and 48° in winter; virtually, an average spring temperature all the year round. The climate has been compared with that of California. It is more equable. It is not as cold in Otago in winter as in the Shasta region of the "Pacific Slope" in the same season, nor so warm at Auckland in summer as at Los Angeles. With the possible exception of Ireland no country is more plentifully supplied with rivers and the purest of drinking water. While there is a copious annual rainfall, the harvest-time is seldom subjected to its visitations, as, unfortunately, happens so frequently in Ireland. Being a long and narrow country (the two main islands combined measuring about 1000 miles long, and an average of 150 broad), and surrounded on all sides by the sea, with no land near to intercept air currents, the atmosphere is more or less impregnated with ozone in all parts of both islands. Then the snowy ranges in the middle island, standing along the west centre of Otago, give a delightful tonic to the air in summer, as the winds bring down the cooling currents to the plains.

The death-rate of New Zealand is the lowest known of any country in which mortality statistics are recorded. For the past ten years it has averaged about 10 per 1000. Its four large cities—Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin—average

(including suburbs) 13'30, 12'50, 10'54, and 9'15 respectively. Auckland being a sub-tropical climate, has its death-rate among children larger than in the other cities, and swells the general record against the city's reputation for salubrity. In infantile mortality the figures stand for the cities named (in the above order), 14'14, 12'43, 11'69, and 6'05 deaths under one year per 100 births. Excluding infants, Auckland had a death-rate of 9'77 per 1000 in 1895, and Dunedin one of 8'03.

For New Zealand scenery I have endeavoured to speak a little, but it was only of what I saw and passed through. It is true I travelled almost the whole length of the two islands, from the Bluff to Auckland, and across from east to west, of the middle island, but I had to pass by the country of the lakes and sounds, glaciers and giant peaks, in western Otago, and was also unable to see the west coast of the north island. This would be like travelling from Queenstown to Dublin, thence to Connemara on to Westport, on to Sligo, thence to Belfast and Londonderry, missing Glengariff, Killarney, and Donegal. In landscape richness and variety I would call New Zealand a combination of Swiss, Californian, Irish, and Scottish scenery, with features favourably comparing, in their beauty or wildness, with the choicest views of each of these countries.

The Scotch are, I think, the predominant nationality in New Zealand, though I have no figures with which to verify this impression. The English come next, a close second, with my countrymen a long way behind in numerical proportion. The people, as a whole, strike you as being somewhat stronger in build than those of the other colonies. The physical character of the country, particularly of the middle island, should nourish the growth of a larger-chested race than would that of the colonies less favoured with mountain ranges, cool climate, and some limestone formation in the soil. The native Maori race was one of great strength, of fine fighting qualities and love of independence; gifts conferred largely by the physical and climatic character of the country. These traits, engrafted upon those with which the British and Irish races are also endowed, must give to the future New Zealand commonwealth all the strongest qualities of an indomitable nation. In one of his semi-humorous predictions about the future of Australasia Marcus Clarke says that New Zealand will ultimately rule all the antipodean states that are, in time, to compose a Federated Empire of their own. Without, however, looking so far ahead, or speculating upon a likely enough contingency of an inde-

pendent Australasia, no one can travel through this singularly favoured country without noting the fine virile qualities of its inhabitants, and predicting for them and their offspring a future of progress and prosperity worthy of one of the loveliest and richest countries of the world.

Agriculture, wool and meat growing are the leading industries which give employment to the greater portion of the population. The rich and well-watered plains and valleys of the middle island are well adapted for agriculture, and all the cereal crops of Great Britain and Ireland thrive on a soil equally as good, and a climate much more favourable, than the old countries are blessed with. There are 20,000,000 acres of good grass land, including native and sown grasses, and it is estimated that upwards of as many million sheep are found to-day browsing on these pastures. A million head of cattle are likewise counted in the colony's present industrial assets. Dairying for export has made great strides in recent years, and we are as likely to be made as familiar with New Zealand butter and sterilized milk in the near future as we have been in the recent past with chilled mutton from the same remote region.

In the export of its surplus produce the government of the colony is acting almost as a London broker in the interest of the producers. So are the governments of all the other colonies too, only New Zealand has, I think, been more intelligently active in this way than her friendly rivals in the race for competition with British and Irish food-growers in the English market. There were over a million and a half of carcasses of sheep, and seven hundred thousand of lambs, exported as chilled meat in 1896. There are twenty large freezing works, seventy cheese factories, seventy-three butter factories, and one hundred and thirteen creameries now at work in the New Zealand export food trade.

The mining industry of the colony has been already touched upon. From twelve to fifteen thousand men are employed in its gold and coal mines. Wages will average, probably, ten shillings a day all round at mining work, and living is comparatively cheap. There is also a large lumber or timber industry, chiefly in the north island, where the kauri forests and the totara trees are mainly found. There are still supposed to be 20,000,000 acres of forest in New Zealand, made up of kauri, totara, red pine, silver beech, and other less noted timbers. The kauri tree has a handsome appearance, shooting straight up to a height often over a hundred feet, having a diameter

of five or six feet, and throwing out, in its upward search for air and sunshine, branches and foliage of much beauty.

An industry peculiar to New Zealand is that of fossicking for kauri gum, which gives a profitable employment in the north island to six or seven thousand people. Of these over a thousand are Maoris. The average earning of the gum-gatherer is £1 5s. a week. They live a kind of gipsy life, camping out in the bush during their labours, and saving money. Workers in other industries, when out of regular employment, resort to the kauri fields, and manage to get along very well until trade improves in their own line. Small fees are charged by the government for fossicking on Crown lands, and by private owners too. The rule is for gum-gatherers to sell what they find to the owners of the land or swamp on which the gum is got. A ton of this gum, if clean and pure, will bring £50 or £60 in the market. The middlemen, as usual, walk off with the biggest slice of the profit. The output from the colony in recent years has averaged near half a million pounds' worth annually. This gum is found in lumps of various size under the soil or in swamps, and is the fossil remains of the fallings from the kauri turpentine tree. Men seek for it with an iron spike on a handle, and a spade. The ground, or swamp, is prodded in search of the lumps, and where there are indications of a find the earth is shovelled away and the gum is gathered. The gum, or resin, is the most valuable ingredient in oil varnishes, and a ready market is found for it in the United States and England.

I have already, and at considerable length, spoken of New Zealand's progressive legislation. Adverse comment has been made from time to time in a portion of the British Press upon the semi-socialistic laws which have been enacted out there since 1890. This criticism is of the uninformed character. It argues from a pet or passing prejudice to a desired conclusion, and not from a knowledge or experience of the measures themselves to their effects upon the industries and people for whose regulation and benefit they were placed on the statute book. The facts are against the critics, and in favour of the laws which they condemn. Trade has increased, revenue has increased, and general prosperity has increased steadily, but surely, in recent years. These results offer a sounder and safer comment upon the value of these New Zealand laws than a mere academic judgment can give sixteen thousand miles away.

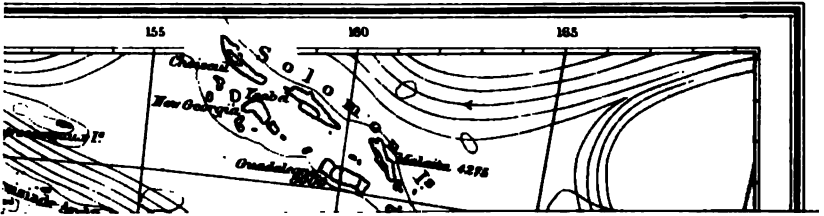


## CHAPTER LXXIII.

### AUSTRALASIA AND NEW HOMES

I HAVE been written to by several people since returning from my tour through Australasia asking for advice and information as to which of the colonies, and to what particular city or locality in any of them, I would recommend those to go to who are wishful to seek a new home. It has been no easy task to impart the required guidance. Nor can I in this closing chapter take the responsibility of marking out any one colony as being a more favourable field for a new start in life than another. That would be a very invidious task indeed. I have written my impressions of each and all of them in the foregoing pages, just as they appeared to me in all their traits and character; imparting such information as came within my observation or reach as might give a sketch of both the distinctive and general features of the life and industries of the seven countries respectively. The colonies in this matter must all speak for themselves. I can only summarize in a few final remarks what Australasia, as a whole, offers to those who may choose to exchange the old for a new world full of youthful hopes and promise.

Speaking generally of all the colonies, I would unhesitatingly say that they give better all-round conditions of existence to the average man than any of the European countries I am acquainted with. A drier and healthier climate, higher wages, and less labouring hours for workers, with all the prospects and possibilities of young and only partially developed countries added to the solid advantages of the present. When I say "workers," however, it is necessary to specify my meaning. In the large cities, such as Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Brisbane and corresponding industrial centres, there is no room, nor is there likely to be any until the country population increases, for ordinary artisans or general labourers. These places are amply provided in their present mechanical classes with skilled and ordinary toilers. Indeed, the four cities just mentioned



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have their casual unemployed problem to face, just as we have in the large cities in Great Britain and Ireland. The allurements of city attractions, mocking all the more healthful conditions of rural industry, invite the youthful and ambitious just as with us. They flock in, crowding the labour market, and create those economic and social competitions which tend to similarize the wage-earning life of all civilized cities. The avenues to employment in such centres are therefore closed to mechanical and manual labour from outside. But there are immense resources of potential industry and wealth in the yet undeveloped gold, silver, and coal deposits known to exist, in addition to those in actual operation, in almost every colony, and awaiting only the advent of the necessary enterprise to provide work for tens of thousands more hands.

Then there are the almost boundless areas of land; great sections of it almost useless for cultivation, it is true, through want of sufficient water in some, and by more or less sterility of quality in other, colonies. But, offering nevertheless in the enormous extent of fair and fruitful land, the comparatively easy terms of tenure, and the variety of products which the soil will readily render up for intelligent treatment, an almost limitless field for men of grit and courage. Those who want a change of life and livelihood from that of the crowded and over-competitive existence of the older world to where there is more elbow room and better chances of social and material advancement in a new one cannot, in my humble judgment, go to a more favoured region in the world than to Australasia.

The question of emigration from Great Britain is bound to be one of vital importance to its working classes as the already dense labouring population grows from year to year. A serious trade depression, such as that which occurred in Lancashire thirty odd years ago, or the growing contraction of foreign markets, through the competition of Germany and of other countries with British products, must, sooner or later, make emigration an agony question for the wage-earning millions of Great Britain. Where, in such an emergency, would be the most likely country for refuge or rescue? The United States are already "congested"; employment is as precarious in the industrial centres there as in England. Canada has plenty of room, with abundant opportunities for settlers, especially in the north-west and British Columbia. There is, however, a strong prejudice (very unfounded as far, at least, as British Columbia is concerned), on account of the rigorous winter climate, against "Our Lady of the

Snows." This feeling is likely to operate in the British popular mind until the western Canadian countries become better known.

Africa is boomed by Charter Company papers and shareholders as the coming home of the British emigrant. I doubt whether it will ever become a white man's country in the sense that America and Australia are such. The African native races are not dying out as in America and at the antipodes; quite the reverse. They are made of more enduring stamina. They are land-workers and pastoralists, not hunters and helpless idlers, and are more likely to learn how to better work the soil and support a larger population than to die out just to accommodate the wants and interests of the white colonist. Short of a concerted general extermination by England, France, and Germany, the African races are more prone to increase and multiply in the future than to disappear and make room for the European. There will therefore be no wide field for the absorption of surplus white labour, English or German, on the African continent. The Australias and New Zealand only remain as the roomy lands to which emigrants from Great Britain can look to as offering the asylum of new homes and hopes whenever they wish, or are compelled by circumstances, to abandon the old ones.

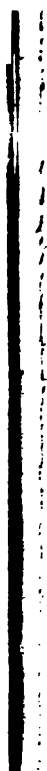
Each of the seven colonies presents abundance of opportunities to new comers, provided only they are prepared to settle upon and work the land. This is an all-essential condition. There is practically unlimited land, but, as already pointed out, only very limited chances for wage-earning employment. The soil so far operated by labour is infinitesimal in quantity compared with the hundreds of millions of available acres still awaiting settlement. Even the pastoral occupation, extensive as it is in comparison with "home" notions of sheep and cattle farming, comprises but a small percentage of the vast extent of the lands of these countries. Immense areas are still in the hands of the government of each colony, though it must be borne in mind that the most valuable land in all the colonies has been disposed of to individuals and companies, and is held for prospective value where not in actual use in agricultural or pastoral holdings. Large tracts of the best land in New Zealand, Tasmania, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia, used at present for wool growing, could provide millions of arable farms for general tillage purposes if population pressed upon the present narrow area of agricultural production. If this pick of the Australasian soil was now in the possession of the respective colonial governments, and available for settle-





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ment and cultivation, there would be far less difficulty encountered in the task of inducing suitable workers to go out from Europe and give to the antipodean countries all they want with which to open up their still measureless resources—population. More than one of these governments have already awakened to the folly of parting with their richest lands to speculators, and are now trying to buy them back for the more valuable economic purposes of settlement and industry.





## PART IX.

# AUSTRALASIAN PRISONS

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## CHAPTER LXXIV.

### AUSTRALIAN COMPARED WITH BRITISH PRISONS

BEING interested in the subject of prison reform and the treatment of prisoners, I made it a point to visit the leading prisons in each of the colonies in order to gather information. Every possible facility was given me to inspect these prisons, the governor's punishment book being shown to me whenever asked for. There was no desire on the part of any official to shut out anything from view, or to put any impediment in the way of the most searching inquiry into the treatment of the prisoners under their charge. I give my notes of these visits in a brief chapter on each prison, beginning with New Zealand and travelling backwards (over the ground covered in the foregoing sketches) to Western Australia.

The Australian prisons are an advance upon those of England in the more enlightened and more effective discipline imposed on criminals. I was much impressed with the progressive spirit which I saw manifested in both the management of prisoners and prisons. The horrible record of the old Imperial penal *régime* has doubtless had a good deal to do with the creation of a system which, though a very long way from being perfect, is, nevertheless, a great advance upon what obtains in England. I noticed the entire absence (except in one or two instances) of that systematic disciplinary irritation which is so conspicuous a feature of English prisons. There is not a single tread-mill or cell-crank in the whole of Australasia. Those cruelly absurd instruments of labour-torture have no place in the punishments inflicted upon

criminals out there. Neither is there the equally stupid practice, so provocative of insubordination, of never allowing a prisoner to act except as the direct instrument of the warder's will. Whether at labour in the workshops, or at exercise in the yards, prisoners are not jostled by warders at every step as in England. Civil overseers, skilled in the necessary crafts, are substituted for contact with the prisoners while at daily toil, and impart either instruction or reprimand, as the case may be, to the convict under the overseer's industrial charge. The warder's duty is to stand at a distance and see that nothing goes wrong. This common-sense practice is also seen in the general guardianship of the prisons. Warder-sentinels are placed at angles on the boundary walls, under structural shelter from rain or sunshine, but so situated that they can observe all that goes on in the yard below, while able also to command the external approaches to the prison. This arrangement takes the warders out of reach of attacks by dangerous criminals, and relieves prisoners of all classes from the needless annoyance of being subjected to immediate contact with their jailers at every turn every hour in the day.

Another conspicuous feature, and an equally desirable advance upon the English system, is the practice by which visiting magistrates try prisoners for serious breaches of prison discipline. The governor and the visiting director inflict all punishments in British and Irish prisons. The administrative and judicial functions are united, and men—chiefly military men—who have virtually to accuse prisoners through their warder deputies, have also the power to measure out justice to the offending prisoner under their charge. This bad practice is not recognized at the antipodes, owing probably to the reaction in the public mind out there against the horrible outrages which irresponsible prison power committed in the "old days," and which inspired Marcus Clarke to write his immortal work on the fiendish cruelties of Port Arthur and other prisons. Justices responsible to the public, and not officers responsible to themselves alone, are the proper tribunal for prison offences, and it is to be hoped that England will soon follow in this respect the footsteps of reformers beyond the seas.

The one dominant and wholesome feature of Australian prisons is Industrialism. Work is not made a matter of mockery or torture, as it is with the tread-mill and crank votaries here in England. Useful labour of some kind, either for the state or for himself, every prisoner has to perform at every stage of his sentence, except in a few prisons. It is rightly recognized that if

any treatment can kill or lessen the evil practices of the criminal classes it is that which will induce or enforce habits of industry. A prison should not be a place of punishment exclusively, but a place in which evil-doers should be taught, while undergoing the penalties of coercive detention, that it is better to work than to steal for a living, and the pointing out of a way in which to earn such a living on discharge should be included as an essential part of all enlightened prison discipline.

The New Zealand Prison system interested me personally in one respect. Its head, Captain Hume, once tried me for an alleged breach of rules in Dartmoor! We met during my stay in Wellington, and I was glad to find that he was considered to be an able and humane administrator. His reputation for fairness while in Dartmoor was akin to that which he has acquired in a wider and more liberal field, which allows for the exercise of more initiative in officials, and where the penal system is not dominated by Home Office clerks promoted to prison commissionerships. The prison system of this colony is a mixture of English and Australian features. There is no dark cell punishment. Refusal to work and ordinary prison irregularities are punished with bread and water diet and loss of privileges; a magistrate, as in the other colonies, adjudicating in all such cases. No flogging of prisoners, except as part of the judge's sentence, takes place in Wellington prison. Visits to prisoners are accorded on the English plan; so is the privilege of writing letters; but the governor assured me he never refused a reasonable request from a prisoner who wished to communicate with wife, family, or respectable friends. There are neither chaplains nor schoolmasters in New Zealand prisons. Prisoners wishing to instruct themselves are allowed pen and ink, slates, etc., for a stated time in the week, and under proper supervision. Books are distributed once a week by a prisoner. Fiction, history, and travel are the books most sought after by prisoners. No tobacco is allowed to prisoners now. The practice has been discontinued since 1883.

There is no proper classification of criminals. All are mixed up as in the English system. Talking is not prohibited at labour, but it must not be loud, or such as to interfere with prisoners' work. I found the governor of Wellington convict prison a progressive disciplinarian. He was no believer in cranks, wind-grinding, or time-wasting, labour-killing occupations. He favours industrialism as the best moral and bodily treatment for criminals, and would have all prisons given up to labour-



tasks of land reclamation, road-making, etc., as far as possible. He does not believe that prison punishment will ever make a bad man a good member of society. His remedy was to train him out of bad habits into good industrial ones, as far as keeping him to useful employment while in prison will accomplish this end.

The labour tasks in this prison partake of the public and inside kind. There is some brick-making carried on, while the usual sedentary employments are also pursued, but only with the object of providing suitable work for prisoners unfit for hard labour, and of supplying the government service with certain articles which save the public purse, while not competing with the produce of outside free labour. The cells are fairly well lighted. Three men sleep in each cell in hammocks, and all meals are eaten in the cells too. A prisoner can obtain a separate cell to sleep in if he prefers it to association. This semi-association plan of sleeping has not produced any of the bad results which led to the abolition of the old dormitory system in English prisons. At least so I was assured by the governor.

Fifty per cent. of the prisoners in Wellington gaol at the time of my visit were old offenders—re-convicted criminals. There were one hundred and thirty males and twelve females undergoing sentence. Twenty per cent. of those were Maoris, and the governor told me they were among the best-conducted of the criminals under his charge. The English plan of remission by marks and of granting a gratuity on discharge obtains in New Zealand. Warders are slightly better paid than in the other colonies, and get their uniforms and quarters free, while their hours of duty average only eight per day.

The prison is not well adapted for its purpose, having been built in the young days of the colony. It has, however, a very fine outlook upon both the city and the sea, and must be, from its elevation, a healthy place. Wellington is built within a natural amphitheatre, and its streets rise up terrace-like from the level of the sea. The prison stands upon one of the highest terraces, and looks out upon the whole of the capital and on the bay round which it is built. It is not, I believe, of this, but of a Dunedin prison the story is told of the early days of the five provinces of New Zealand, when the governor, failing to obtain the necessary funds for the upkeep of his gaol, was in the habit of turning his prisoners out every morning to beg for food directly from the citizens. The story says that he was careful to warn the prisoners to be back punctually at seven in the evening, under penalty of being locked out all night!

There is a steady decrease of all kinds of crime in this colony during the past decade. According to the latest report I have seen of criminal statistics there were 555 prisoners undergoing sentence in New Zealand prisons at the end of the year 1894, including Maoris. This number gives a proportion of 0·76 per 1000 of population. During that year a total of 3561 persons had been arrested and lodged for trial in the various gaols of the country. Of these the official report says, "375 men and 39 women had been convicted once before; 213 men and 37 women, twice; 817 men and 384 women, three or more times. Of the 3561 prisoners received 3063 were able to read and write, 129 could read only, 330 were unable to read, and 39 were of superior education." The summary convictions in the same year numbered 12,934, and included 321 Maoris. Under an admirable law passed in 1882 magistrates are empowered, but only with the consent of the accused, to deal summarily with the minor serious offences which usually went to the criminal courts. The result has been most satisfactory, and has, of course, lessened the number of convictions by the higher tribunals. There is also a First Offenders' Probation Act in operation, which has likewise tended to give those convicted for the first time a chance of retrieving their careers. Out of 633 persons placed on probation since the Act came into force (1886) 540 fulfilled the conditions attached to release, 38 were still on probation, and 37 were re-arrested; figures which speak well for the Act in question.

## CHAPTER LXXV.

### TASMANIAN PRISONS

THERE are but two chief prisons now in Tasmania, those of Hobart and Launceston, and so law-abiding has the once criminal-ridden island colony become that scarcely any serious crime is now committed there. The present record of the country, in all classes of crime, is the best of all the Australias. In 1894 there were only 3·5 of every 1000 of the population charged before magistrates with drunkenness. The convictions in the superior courts in the same year were 0·60 per 1000, while there were no murders committed or capital sentences passed. The total police force of Tasmania numbered in that year only 277.

This is a marvellous change from the condition of the island before it obtained self-government and the management of its own prisons. In nothing will this change appear more striking than in the diminution of the crime of murder. Going back by decades from the record of 1894, which showed no such crime for that year, we find\* that there were five such crimes from 1881-90; three, 1871-80; fifteen, 1861-70; thirty-two, 1851-60; and eighty-three from 1841 to 1850. Beyond this decade we get into the times of the prison hells of Port Macquarie, Norfolk Island, Port Arthur, and Hobart; and of the flogging-and-gallows rule of governors Davey, Arthur, Eardley-Wilmot, and others, with the hideous records of convict outbreaks, shootings, and wholesale executions. The change from these periods to the present is literally one from an Inferno to the Paradise which many visitors to the lovely island declare it to be.

Port Arthur was the chief scene of the convict horrors so powerfully depicted in the novel *For the Term of His Natural Life*. The prison was visited by Marcus Clarke in 1870, when his great work was in preparation, and his graphic description

\* COGHLAN'S *Seven Colonies of Australasia*, p. 96.

of the wild scenery of Tasman's Peninsula is no more true to nature than is the realism of the penal infamies which are so vividly imprinted on the pages of his book. Before going over the prison he inspected some of its records in search of material for his novel, and he relates, in the account of his visit,\* a few of the facts gathered in his search. "There I found," he says, "set down in various handwritings the history of some strange lives—John Doe, poaching, ten years, York Assizes, 1832. Flogged twice for insubordination. Absconding from his hired service, ten years' (more) penal servitude."

"Asking the official, 'Who is the worst man you have alive now?' the reply was, 'I think that Mooney is the worst. Let me see. Here we are: Transported at thirteen years of age for poaching, flogged—but there, you can read it for yourself. He was in the Jacky-Jacky business at Norfolk Island. He has drawn lots with another man for murder; he has been a bushranger—oh, a terrible fellow!'

"'And where is he now?'

"'Oh,' said the genial official, with a calm self-satisfaction (so it seemed to me) at the excellence of the system which he administered, 'he is all right now; we've got him all right now. He's a lunatic at Port Arthur now!'"

Mr. Clarke desired to see this growth of a devilish law and corresponding satanic system of "reformation," and he describes the scene as follows: "The criminal lunatics were of but two dispositions—they cowered and crawled like whipped foxhounds to the feet of their keepers, or they raged howling, blasphemous, and hideous imprecations upon the gaolers. I was eager to see my poacher of thirteen years. The warder drew aside a peep-hole in the barred door and I saw a grizzled, gaunt, and half-naked old man coiled in a corner. The peculiar wild-beast smell which belongs to some forms of furious madness exhaled from the cell. The gibbering animal within turned, and his malignant eyes met mine. 'Take care,' said the gaoler, 'he has a habit of sticking his finger through the peep-hole to try and poke somebody's eye out.' I drew back, and a nail-bitten, hairy finger, like the toe of an ape, was thrust with rapid and simian neatness through the aperture. 'That is how he amuses himself,' said the good warder, forcing to the iron slot; 'he'd best be dead, I'm thinking.'"

In 1835 there were 1000 adult convicts and 270 boys in Port

\* *Selected Works*, Melbourne, 1890, p. 190.



Arthur prison, all transported from Great Britain and Ireland! The deportation of criminals to Tasmania was stopped in 1853 as a result of a violent agitation in the colony against its continuance. Two years later Home Rule was obtained, and the evils of the old Imperial system began to abate in the prisons of the island. The convict establishments at Port Macquarie and Norfolk Island had been closed before this event, and those of Port Arthur and Hobart remained as the chief criminal prisons. Port Arthur is distant about fifteen or twenty miles from Hobart, on the east side of the Derwent, on a portion of what is called Tasman's Peninsula. There are no prisoners there now. Those who survived when the place was closed were removed to a kind of prison-asylum at Hobart. They are supported there out of an annual vote of the Imperial Parliament, as are a few similar survivals in Fremantle prison, Western Australia.

The two existing Tasmanian prisons at Hobart and Launceston are, as already mentioned, almost tenantless at present. I went through the Launceston gaol, and beyond the pleasing testimony just accorded to its emptiness, there remains nothing to be said in its favour. There has been no structural alteration in the building. It stands on a small hill within the city bounds, and it looks in its external and inside appearance just the kind of place one would associate with the narratives of the convictions of the days of the wholesale "cat" and gallows discipline. I was shown the place of execution, and saw the trap door from which scores of wretches had been launched into eternity for the comparatively trivial as well as occasionally hideous offences of these times. On one occasion twelve convicts were hung in one batch. They had mutinied or attempted to escape, or did some similar thing which could only be expiated on the scaffold, according to the law and spirit of the time.

The hangman, after inspecting the well-used death-dealing machine, expressed a fear that he could not "send a dozen off together." The chaplain of the prison, who was standing near at the time, declared, "Oh, yes, you can hang a dozen there *quite comfortably!*" Barring the somewhat interested views of the dozen, the event went off, in the Christian consoler's language, "quite comfortably."

There were only a dozen inmates of this prison when I went through it. They were smoking and chatting together in an exercise yard. They had evidently fallen on better days and, we may hope, on better-minded chaplains. The cells are roomy



but rough and very repellent-looking. The food is ample in quantity, while the discipline is only nominal, owing to the fewness of those who are subjected to its correction.

The chain-room had a horrible story to tell of "the other days." I saw one set of irons which weighed fully *fifty pounds*, and the officer told me that these had been worn by convicts "who could run up the prison stairs with them!" The average weight of the collection would be a dozen pounds. One could not help expressing his thanks, on seeing this room full of instruments of prison torture of such a kind, that they are no longer—except in one hideous instance, also happily rare—a part of the law and order instruments of Tasmania.

There is one very reprehensible and barbarous custom retained from the uncivilized Imperialism of the past, not alone in this, but practically in every other colony in Australia—that of putting criminals under capital sentence into irons immediately after the death penalty has been pronounced. This law is at once so unnecessary for the ends of justice or detention, and so abominably cruel in every sense, that it is all but impossible to realize how it can be continued by self-governing colonies in which there is a sincere and healthy detestation of the prison barbarities which were carried on under the Downing Street domination. It is a purely gratuitous piece of senseless cruelty, more worthy of the aborigines who first owned these colonies than of the Anglo-Saxon race which brags so much of its progressive enlightenment. I was told in one or two of the colonies by officials to whom I spoke on this matter, that the custom had "come down to them" from the convict times, and was not now generally carried out. Members of the Victorian government were very desirous of clearing the character of their country from this reproach, and I believe the rule which sanctioned the practice is not now rigidly enforced in that colony.

This rule declared:—

"Prisoners under sentence of death shall be kept in the condemned cells until the sentence be executed or commuted, and shall be dressed in prison clothing, and shall never be left without a warder, or other attendant, detailed for the duty of attending or controlling them. If males, they shall be kept in irons, and their hair cut close on head and face, provided that the Governor of the gaol may in his discretion, and with the sanction of the Inspector-General, exempt from irons any male prisoner under sentence of death."

The official who showed me over Darlinghurst prison, Sydney, admitted that all prisoners under a death sentence were so ironed in New South Wales, and, in fact, this wholly needless piece of

legal savagery is practised without protest in all the colonies. In Launceston gaol I had the irons used for this purpose in my hands. They weighed from fourteen to twenty pounds, and they remain rivetted round both feet night and day until a few hours before the execution takes place! There is no other civilized community in the world where anything so barbarous as this is now resorted to in such cases, and it is sincerely to be hoped that Australasia will speedily rid itself of this unique and reprehensible distinction.

## CHAPTER LXXVI.

### "ST. HELENA"

WHENEVER my fifth imprisonment comes along for opposition to England's anti-Home Rule government in Ireland I shall petition the Home Secretary or Irish Chief Secretary, as the case may be, to allow me to do my sentence at St. Helena—not the island of Napoleonic association, but the less known one in Moreton Bay, Queensland. I have seen in my time many prisons, inside and out, from Dartmoor to Darlinghurst, and from Sligo to Samoa, but my ideal prison is the one I am now about to sketch. It is situated on a pretty little island about a mile long and half a mile broad, and stands eight or ten miles out from the shore in the bay at the mouth of the Brisbane river. It was named St. Helena on account of a notorious nigger-criminal known as "Napoleon," in the old convict times when "Moreton Bay" bore an unenviable reputation for its harsh prison discipline. The merciless discipline has gone, but the island remains still the chief convict prison for the tropical colony. There are no cranks or tread-mills or other scientific barbarisms at St. Helena. All prisoners are engaged at useful labour tasks, and work mainly in the open air at agricultural, dairy, or gardening employment. There are a few inside industries too, such as saddlery and bootmaking; the manufactured goods being for the government service and not for the open market. Men work by themselves in the fields and are permitted to talk. Warders stand at a distance. There are no attempts at escape, as the sea around the island swarms with sharks. I looked over the governor's journal and found a very small record of punishments against the two hundred convicts then in the place. This was owing to the absence of irritating discipline combined with rational labour-tasks, a humane treatment of the prisoners, and good food in return for good conduct and good labour. The governor claimed that this system of treating criminals was a success. There was a time when the prison held four hundred convicts, with much

less of a population in the colony than Queensland has to-day, with half that number of prisoners doing penal servitude. Better conditions of life, more general employment, and other reformatory agencies have tended, of course, to reduce the number of offenders; but the substitution of industrialism and a humane discipline for the old methods has also produced its quota of the good result. It has materially lessened the number of reconvictions. It was interesting also to be told that this change had almost made the prison self-supporting. Substituting well-directed work for scientific fads, recommended by Howard Societies or chaplain reformers with one idea, has shown how superior a little common sense and a little knowledge of criminal human nature is in prison management to all the patent panaceas of salaried parsons. St. Helena has no chaplains. Ministers can come and hold services and see prisoners when they like, but their duties are limited to these functions and they are not paid for them. Good and useful books are allowed to prisoners, and men who want to study are given a few hours in the week for that purpose; half the time being taken from their own leisure and half from the prison requirements. The hours of prison labour are eight per day, exclusive of time for meals. I found the food very good and the rations enough for any working man. All the prisoners eat in association, under a shed in the prison yard. Tobacco was once allowed, as in most Australian prisons, but had to be cut off, I was told, owing to the risk of fire to a wooden structure; the prison being built of that material. This explanation would be very reasonable if smoking was allowed in cells in other colonial prisons, which is not the case. Prisoners partake of the much-coveted indulgence during working hours, and there is a "smoke-ho" time allowed in a few of the prisons for this purpose. The cells at St. Helena are not well lighted, and offer bad facilities for reading after labour hours. The classification is also bad; four prisoners being allowed to sleep in one cell, large enough, it is true, for the purpose, but a bad system all the same. Prisoners objecting to this kind of association can have separate cells for sleeping purposes if they like.

The Colonial Secretary (who is the "Home Secretary" of a colony) visits this prison periodically, when the prisoners can approach him with petitions for remission of sentence. He reduces the sentence or liberates the prisoner whenever the governor and himself are satisfied that a criminal (not of the

hardened kind or one imprisoned for a heinous offence) shows good evidence of reformation. The fact that this power of discriminating clemency is exercised is, of course, known to all those prisoners who are of the casual criminal class, and it encourages them to the observance of that conduct and labour efficiency which are essential to the gaining of such remission. All this strikes me as being a better plan of dealing with the less ingrained criminals than the English marks or ticket-of-leave system. An indefinite imprisonment, depending upon good conduct and especially upon a good working record, gives a greater incentive to the good qualities in the prisoner to show themselves than does the over-lauded marks plan. It may send him home in half the time of his sentence, or he may be compelled to do every day of it. The prize of reformation and the penalty of continued criminality are before the prisoner's mind, and if there is any latent good remaining in him the prize will tempt him to show that which in turn will regain him his liberty long before the sentence would otherwise set him free.

The prison is managed by a staff of forty officers. Warders' salaries begin at £120 and rise to £170, with quarters and clothing gratis and a fortnight's holiday yearly.



## CHAPTER LXXVII.

### NEW SOUTH WALES PRISONS

SYDNEY'S chief prison is that of Darlinghurst, and is within the city boundary. It is as badly situated as it is badly planned for the modern treatment of criminals. It dates from the time when the scaffold, the cat, and the dark cells were considered to be the three sovereign remedies for the repression of crime. New South Wales still clings to these remedies, but does not apply them as promiscuously as a few years ago. There is still a "colonial flogger," I believe, an expert in back scoring, who travels from prison to prison to administer the prison law, but he is not kept as busy now as heretofore. Dark cells are still a strong feature in Darlinghurst discipline. They appeared to me on inspection to be in pretty frequent requisition. Seven days in one of these cells would be calculated to drive an ordinary healthy person half insane. It can, therefore, easily be imagined what the effect of repeated punishments of this horrible kind will have upon bodily and mentally-weakened criminals. This barbarity has been abandoned altogether in New Zealand and Tasmania, and somewhat modified in all the other colonies, except New South Wales. It is a form of punishment which never did and never could produce any good of any kind upon any human being in its application. It might terrorize for the moment, but the after effects on the minds of criminals, mentally debilitating as these were bound to be, would work more in the way of fixing vicious habits by lessening the strength of resistance than in frightening evil-doers out of their indulgence. A prison discipline, no matter how severe, which cannot be upheld without the aids of the dark cell and the "cat" is more a proof of the incapacity of its administrators than of any dogged insubordination in certain classes of criminals.

It is here where a city prison is most at fault. There is no place more unsuited for the successful application of the law's punishment for crime than a prison in the centre of a big palpitating

ting centre of every-day life and activity. Darlinghurst reminded me in this respect of Millbank, now happily replaced by a handsome picture gallery. Houses all round, busy streets alongside, church bells ringing, bands playing, children shouting, barrel organs grinding away from morning to night! Why, the curse of Tantalus was nothing compared with the mockery—the cruel, relentless, and persistent mockery—of all this liberty, life, and laughter all around you, while a whitewashed cell, eight feet by ten, with its bare walls and windows barred, and sunshine limited to some casual rays, shut you in from it all, and gave you, instead of the freedom which was voiced only a few feet away, the task of calculating the number of times Big Ben would strike the quarter-hour in a sentence of fifteen years! And then to calm a mind thus hacked and worried, to correct a wretch who may break down under such a strain, to give him one, two, or seven days on bread and water in a cell out of which the possibility of a single ray of God's light is excluded, is—well, the civilized method of Christian men in dealing with some of those who sin against Society's propriety or property!

All the features of Darlinghurst discipline are not of this bad character. It has excellent workshops with civil overseers teaching prisoners useful occupations and habits of industry. Under all the circumstances, the wonder is that anything so rationally adapted to the industrial reclamation of criminals can be carried on under the happy-go-lucky system of dumping every offender of all races and each sex into such a place. It is a combination of a convict prison, a general lock-up, a casual ward, a drunkards' home, and of an insane "asylum," and the marvel to me was how the unfortunate mortal who was doomed to act as governor of such a place could prevent it from becoming a howling pandemonium. It struck me as being a remarkably well-handled prison, apart from some features of its discipline, and that well-conducted prisoners were given a fair chance to redeem themselves. The classification, as in nearly all the Australian prisons, is bad. Three men sleep in a cell, with the option of a separate sleeping-cell to any prisoner objecting. But if all the prisoners made this demand there would not be cells enough for their accommodation. The inebriates and other casual offenders take up a large number of these cells. First offenders (of the criminal inmates) sleep apart from those with more convictions and exercise apart also, but work in association with the reconvicted. Talking is not allowed at work but is, in a moderate way, at exercise. Prisoners eat together in a shed, when talking is

likewise permitted. The food is plentiful, as in all the Australian prisons without a single exception. Well-conducted prisoners are permitted to assist in keeping accounts and to help in the clerical work of the prison, in the management of stores, etc. I saw one of these privileged convicts with a small bunch of violets before him on a table as he was busy looking over some papers. I forgave Darlinghurst for a good deal of its record for that little touch of human kindness. It made me recollect being once sternly reprimanded by a warder in Dartmoor for having dared to pluck—a daisy! That bunch of violets makes me hope much for Darlinghurst—that, like Millbank, it will soon be replaced by a picture gallery.

Remissions are scaled as follows in the prisons of this colony:—

“By continuous good conduct and industry prisoners become eligible for a remission of sentence in accordance with the following scale:—

“Sentences not exceeding five years, one-sixth of the term; over five and not exceeding ten years, one-fifth; above ten, one-fourth. There is no remission for sentences below a year. The Minister of Justice has power to reconsider all sentences, and to recommend to the Governor such a remission as the facts and circumstances justify. Under Section 409 of the Criminal Code Law Amendment Act a prisoner under sentence may be granted a written license to be at large within specified limits during the unexpired portion of his sentence. Sureties are required, unless under exceptional circumstances, for good behaviour and observance of the conditions of the license. The prisoner who is thus liberated is required to report himself periodically to the police, and is liable to have his license cancelled by misconduct. This system was first adopted in 1891, and at the end of 1895 it had been put in force in 69 cases—66 males and 3 females. By December, 1895, only 2 cases had occurred of licenses being revoked for breach of conditions.

“Prisoners under sentence of penal servitude, of hard labour on the roads and public works, or of imprisonment with hard labour, become eligible for employment upon the public works at Trial Bay prison under the following conditions: Prisoners under sentence of from three to five years, who have not been punished for misconduct within the previous six months, and are favourably recommended by their gaolers, at a period twelve months before they would become eligible for discharge under the ordinary remission regulations, and in anticipation of such discharge; under sentence of five to ten years, with similar conditions as regards conduct, at a period of eighteen months anterior to discharge; and under sentence of ten years and upwards, at a period of two years anterior to discharge. The construction of the break-water is being supervised by officers of the Public Works Department, and the prisoners engaged in the work, who are entirely under the control of the Comptroller-General of Prisons, receive a small sum of money, and are supplied with rations, as well as with clothing, which is not of the prison pattern.”\*

\* *Wealth and Progress of New South Wales, 1897.*

It will be seen from the following extract from the same source as the foregoing how the criminals in the colony's prisons are employed :—

"The following table gives the number of the prisoners employed in the principal and minor gaols at the end of 1895, and those engaged in the principal callings. In some of the gaols there are no means of finding suitable employment of a profitable or useful nature, otherwise the number shown could be very much increased; and it must also be remembered that there are many prisoners whose services are not available for labour, such as those whose sentences do not carry hard labour, and those exempt from work on account of medical and other reasons. The net value of the labour done during 1895 amounted to £21,817, exclusive of the value set upon the labour of the prisoners engaged in the construction of the breakwater at Trial Bay, and of ordinary labour directly connected with the gaols.

Carpenters and assistants . . . . .	38	Bookbinders . . . . .	25
Painters . . . . .	21	Writers . . . . .	29
Blacksmiths and assistants . . . . .	28	Washing . . . . .	65
Tinsmiths . . . . .	18	School assistants . . . . .	5
Masons . . . . .	8	Hospital attendants . . . . .	29
Stonecutters and assistants . . . . .	31	Barbers . . . . .	20
Labourers . . . . .	290	Needlework . . . . .	56
Brushmakers . . . . .	11	Sweepers and cleaners . . . . .	306
Matmakers . . . . .	63	Cooks' assistants . . . . .	99
Shoemakers . . . . .	120	Other employments . . . . .	541
Tailors . . . . .	115		
Hatmakers . . . . .	25	Total employed . . . . .	1943

"Among those classed as engaged in 'other employments' are included 45 prisoners working at the Trial Bay Breakwater."

The "Larrikin" element is a most troublesome one in the life and prisons of New South Wales. A "Larrikin" resembles the American "hoodlum," or English "rough," only he is, as a rule, younger and more untameable. He is bred of parental neglect and absence of all early moral correction, with little or no schooling. A youthful civilized savage, given to drink and all the animal appetites, without any moral sense whatever. He adds considerably to the population of New South Wales prisons, and a special class, "Class Seven," has been set apart for him in the larger gaols, and it may be said of this kind of treatment that it is almost as savage as is the nature it is intended to reform. They are kept in most rigorous seclusion during all the sentence, which seldom exceeds a year. They work in the cells at some task, and get an hour's solitary and silent exercise each day for the first six months, and two hours for the remainder of the sentence. Every other week they are placed on bread and water diet for the whole week! There are no indulgences of



any kind, neither visits nor letters, I believe, and no books except religious ones. If crime of this kind could be exterminated by punitive means, remorseless in their systematic severity, a "Larrikin" would be as rare in New South Wales as a native is in Tasmania. But just as when sheep-stealing was a capital offence in England there were more sheep stolen than now when it only entails a moderate penalty, so has "Larrikinism" not been stamped out by the draconian methods of the Darlinghurst seventh class. The new Director-General of New South Wales prisons has some very cogent observations on this kind of criminal in his latest report, and he touches alike the evil and its remedy where he says:—

"Larrikinism is the product of defective social conditions. It is the creation of environment. It is not much use shutting the larrikin up in prison and applying curative treatment of a moral and physical nature if he is exposed, on leaving gaol, to precisely the same conditions which led to his original fault. The Penal Department can assist in repressing the evil by various deterrent and reformative methods, but it cannot altogether prevent a recurrence, and it most certainly cannot stamp the thing out absolutely. Other things besides prisons are needed to work a cure."

A Central Reformatory school for criminally-disposed children, on something like the Mettray plan; the formation of volunteer companies to attract the boys inclined to mischief, so as to direct their animal energies away from "Larrikinism"; with recreation halls, a people's palace, like that in Mile End Road, London, and similar means, are among the remedies which Captain Weitenstein wisely puts forward for the cure of this evil in Sydney and other Australian cities.

After going over Darlinghurst gaol one is compelled to ask why such a prison should be found inside a city at all. A city prison of this kind is not only an expensive nuisance to the neighbourhood, it is also detrimental to anything like an effective system of prison administration or of criminal reform. Darlinghurst is Sydney's criminal dumping ground. Larrikins, lunatics, vagrants, female law-breakers, and all the other male-factors in the profession of crime, congregate under compulsion inside this badly-planned prison. Men doing forty-eight hours for a "drunk" are to be looked after where convicts under long sentences are also demanding the time and attention of the same officials. Insane persons are to be under special observation where industries are being carried on in the reformatory interest of other prisoners and for the good of the state. It is a most absurd arrangement, and it would require some of



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the qualities of an archangel in an ordinary mortal to become a successful governor of such a prison. This colony is not nearly as criminal as it would make a stranger believe it to be from the number of its prisons. There are no less than twenty-three, not counting police lock-ups. Fancy, twenty-three gaols for a population no larger than that of Glasgow and Manchester combined; two cities with a more numerous criminal class than in the whole of New South Wales. I have before me a report from one of these twenty-three prisons of a most decimal-fraction-making kind. It sets out the daily averages of men employed in the prison service, and records that 0·062 were engaged in buildings, 0·029 as barbers; servants (females) 0·156, sick 0·13, and awaiting trial 0·075—comprising, with other equally exhaustive particulars, “grand totals” of a prison population of 7·409 men and 0·156 females; whatever that fractional portion of a woman may represent in a New South Wales prison. This colony has long suffered under a kind of criminal nightmare, and has sought to rid itself of the magnified evil by spreading a crowd of needless gaols over a country one and a half times larger than France.

A year's record of offences, trivial and serious, in New South Wales, with particulars of the punishments awarded by magistrates and superior courts, may be of some interest. The year dealt with is that of 1895. Several of the minor crimes were committed by one person. The percentage of reconvictions would average forty per cent. of the whole:—

Offences.	Total Offences.	Imprisonment for										Death.
		2 days and under.	3 days and under 1 week.	1 week and under 1 month.	1 month and under 6.	6 months and under 12.	1 year and under 2.	2 years and under 5.	5 years & under 10.	10 years & under 15.	Until order complied with, &c.	
Offences against the person . . . . .	1,044	4	6	310	454	71	66	54	10	4	58	7
Offences against property with violence . . . . .	250	2	..	70	68	30	21	53	6	..	..	..
Offences against property without violence . . . . .	2,256	16	14	476	1,159	364	99	96	31	1	..	..
Forgery and offences against the currency . . . . .	55	..	..	1	1	14	19	17	3	..	..	..
Offences against good order . . . . .	6,166	926	1,095	2,699	1,316	128	2	..	..	..	..	..
Offences not included in the preceding . . . . .	701	65	90	353	130	18	11	18	4	1	11	..
<b>Total offences committed by males.</b>	<b>10,472</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>1,205</b>	<b>3,905</b>	<b>3,128</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>7</b>

"It will be seen that the sentence of death was passed on seven males. In one case only was it carried out, and in the other six cases it was commuted to imprisonment for life. The crime for which the sentence was carried out was attempt to murder, while those for which it was commuted were murder, attempt to murder, rape, and carnal knowledge of a girl under ten years of age. Of the persons included in the column 'Until order complied with,' etc., fifty-eight were wife and child deserters, against whom there were unsatisfied maintenance orders, and the remaining eleven persons were ordered to be imprisoned during the pleasure of the Court for contempt."\*

It is only fair towards New South Wales that the cosmopolitan character of its law-breakers should be referred to. A large number of these drift into Sydney from other colonies, and swell the colony's figures beyond its own proportion of offenders. The government statistician supplies the following interesting figures and facts in relation to the arrests of males in 1895:—

"Taking only the male offenders committed to gaol, and comparing them with the male population, the most law-abiding portion of the community are the much-abused Chinese, who show 787 convictions per 100,000. Next come the Italians, with 989 per 100,000; then the South Australians, with 1286; the English, with 1613; the Germans, with 1658; the native-born inhabitants of New South Wales, with 1804; the Scotch, with 1875; the Danes, with 2103; the Irish, with 2389; the Victorians, with 2624; the Western Australians, with 2674; the French, with 3093; the Tasmanians, with 3234; the New Zealanders, with 3412; the Russians, with 4068; the Swedes and Norwegians, with 4735; the natives of the United States, with 5364; and the Queenslanders, with 5398. Even these figures, though deduced from proper data, require some explanation. The offenders belonging to the United States and to Scandinavia are for the most part sailors, whose offences should not be charged against the general population; some of the French are recidivists from New Caledonia; and, indeed, it may be said that the offences do not arise from the nationality of the offender, but from his ignorance, his poverty, or his environment."

Six or seven prisons would be enough for the requirements of the colony if a systematic plan of administration were adopted. All the irreclaimable criminals could be confined in Biloela, the "Larrikins" and kindred classes at Berrima, the women at Bathurst, insane prisoners at Parramatta, while a large central prison, with a few thousand acres of land attached, could be built by prison labour at some place like Dubbo, where agricultural, dairying, and gardening pursuits could be carried on. A central reformatory institution would also fall in with such a plan, and could be built in some part of the Riverina, where good land and a pleasant-looking country would help to train neglected waifs and strays into healthy, industrial habits.

\* *Wealth and Progress of New South Wales*, p. 403. 1897.

Since commencing to transcribe the notes of my visit to Darlinghurst and Bathurst prisons I have received the latest report (1896) of the Comptroller-General of New South Wales prisons, and I have rarely read a more lucid and enlightened treatise on the whole subject of criminal administration than Captain Weitenstein adds as an appendix to this official document. It covers the whole field of reform in a series of criticisms and proposals as courageous as they are convincing, and one feels, after reading such an able paper, that the prison system of this colony in the hands of a man so thoroughly capable and resourceful will soon be made an example for that of other colonies and countries to follow.

With regard to the law of capital punishment, New South Wales adheres to the needless barbarism of manacling condemned prisoners immediately after sentence, a practice which, as the parent colony, it first began and handed on as worthy of imitation to the younger members of the family of Australian states. It is, of course, a relic of the old convictism, and a disgraceful one to clothe with the sanction of modern law. To even a savage tribunal of darkest Africa the death penalty would be considered as far as the vengeance of the victor should go. Not so, however, in the civilized Australian colonies. The few days or weeks allowed to the condemned criminal must be embittered by the rivetting on of chains, ten or fifteen pounds weight, and which the wretch must wear, night and day, until the moment the hangman approaches and claims him for the scaffold. I visited the condemned cell in Darlinghurst for the purpose of seeing whether there was any possible necessity for this legal barbarity. There was absolutely none. The cells are specially constructed, and room is provided inside them for an attendant warder, who watches day and night to see that the doomed man shall not anticipate the death sentence. The retention of this merciless piece of cruelty is only a tribute to the brutalism which once distinguished the legal methods of this colony beyond that of any other civilized land. Nor has this savage sentiment yet deserted other departments of the colony's judicial system. The Mount Rennie trial, in 1886, stands without a parallel in the modern history of civilized nations for the ferocity with which the arm of the law struck at and sent to the scaffold no less than five boys for a crime which in England would have entailed, at most, a sentence of one or two years' imprisonment. The late Mr. Justice Wendeyer was held up by a courageous section of the Sydney press to well-merited odium for this judicial

crime, but the censure was far too circumscribed. The governor who sanctioned the executions, the ministry who supinely bowed before the judicial rage of the bench, and, above all, the moral cowardice of the public opinion which tolerated all these connivers at wholesale judicial murder, were more to blame than the judge who interpreted from his own passion a past enactment of a legal savagery. Twelve men, nearly all youths, were tried for a rape on a girl. She gave evidence, in a most cool and collected manner, against them. Imputations were made against her which I will not repeat here. But leaving these on one side, will it be deemed credible here in these old countries that nine men were sentenced to execution for this crime? Five of these went to the scaffold, and the others to imprisonment for life. Some of these have since been liberated, owing to the tortoise-like awakening of the public conscience of Sydney on the awful gravity of the tragedy which it allowed to be enacted in the name of law. One of the ablest men in the colony, who has also been a minister of the Crown, expressed himself as follows, at the time, as to the conduct of the judge who tried the Mount Rennie case:—

“I know of no instance in which, regardless of having exhausted the powers of counsel and jurors, such a persistent continuousness of the trial has taken place. I know of no instance in this country where at late hours in the night, as we now learn from the protests of the counsel engaged in the case, appeals for an adjournment, in order to enable the recruiting of exhausted energies to take place, were so disregarded. Such examples could only be discovered in some of the darkest pages of a very dark period of Irish history, when counsel, in whose hands were committed the lives and liberties of human beings, appealed in vain to the tribunal for some consideration, and for some regard for human weakness.”\*

\* W. B. DALLEY, Q.C., on the “Mount Rennie Trial,” in *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 6th, 1887.

## CHAPTER LXXVIII.

### BATHURST PRISON

THE prison at Bathurst is about the third largest in New South Wales, and is governed on the same rules which obtain at Darlinghurst. It accommodates two or three hundred prisoners. It is well situated, beyond the town, but has only a small portion of land comprised within its walls. More land for gardening and agriculture and less costly frontage would have been a more sensible arrangement. Wherever I see an imposing and ornamental prison exterior I am prepared for some other folly inside in the way of expensive but inefficient treatment of criminals. Bathurst prison is an instance. The gaol has a frontage that would suggest a college or a benevolent asylum, or anything but the purpose the building was intended to serve. It was erected by free labour, another expensive folly, and cost the colony some £30,000, while prisoners were at the same time available in the various other prisons in the country to build a place such as that which answers its purpose so well at Yatala, near Adelaide. Immediately you enter the palace-like gateway at Bathurst prison you perceive one of those disciplinary fads which are the fruit of a servile study of English ideas. The governor pointed out with seeming pride an elliptical arrangement in concrete, about two feet wide, and sunk about a foot below the level of the prison yard, resembling a channel for water. It was an "exercise" ring. A chain-like arrangement of rope and wood had to be carried by prisoners doing their hour's walk within this channel, with knots on the rope so as to fix the exact mathematical distance one prisoner was to "exercise" behind his fellow, while all had to carry this thing along in silence with them, round and round this concreted circle. If this elaborate contrivance was expressly planned to take from the one hour's daily exercise allowed to certain prisoners all the physical benefit and mental ease which an hour in the open air outside a small cell was intended to give, it could not be better devised for so



paradoxical a purpose. A generation back Charles Reade, in *Never too Late to Mend* (a story which, by the way, deals largely with this very district of Bathurst), denounced prison cranks and kindred contrivances as "monsters begot of folly upon science to degrade labour below theft." To look at these men carrying this "exercise" thing in their hands, and observe a warder watching them to see if one man held his rope an eighth of an inch beyond the knot, or if any of them dared to open his mouth or use a tongue which God gave him to speak with, was a sickening sight of an official imbecility worthy in every way of the spirit which begot the tread-mills and cranks of the "model" English prisons. An hour with a pickaxe, spade, or sweeping brush, or anything else that would suggest rational and useful work of some kind, for either the prison or the prisoner, would be more beneficial physically and morally than all this costly and elaborate faddist folly.

Dark cells are a strong feature in Bathurst discipline. These are absolutely impervious to light and sound, and a sentence of seven days with bread and water can be imposed for refusal to work or other serious breach of discipline. Bad as some features of the English "model" system of semi-starvation and silence is, it does not now include this kind of cruel mind and eye torture. That flogging should also obtain, where dark cells are used, is not surprising. Brutal methods of correction never did and never will instil moral precepts or beget good behaviour in prisoners. It is the mistake of treating a man, even in his most degraded condition, as you would treat a dog or a donkey. It is the mind that makes all the difference, and the most debased mind in the most hardened criminal will revolt against the kind of discipline which the nature of the donkey or the dog might put up with. Where "scientific" methods are in vogue, it is almost certain that common-sense arrangements will have no show. The classification of prisoners at Bathurst is bad. There is some attempt of the kind for the first year of long sentences, but it is abandoned afterwards both as to work and sleeping arrangements. Three prisoners sleep in a cell, thirteen feet by eight and twelve high, but, beyond segregating men convicted for unnatural offences, there is no precaution against the association of habitual with casual criminals. Silence is prescribed during probation, which is nine months here as in England. Moderate talking is afterwards permitted at work and exercise. A small allowance of tobacco is earnable by prisoners for good conduct and work after the first year of

the sentence has been put in. The other prison arrangements follow those referred to at Darlinghurst, but it is only just to the governor of Bathurst prison to say that its workshops are all what such places should be, and that nothing is left undone to give prisoners a good industrial training when once they earn the privilege of being admitted to these occupations. Marble polishing is one of the industries carried on, and the work done by some of the prisoners looked equal to anything of the kind you would find in free labour workshops. Prisoners appeared healthy and robust. A very large percentage of them bore the strong criminal traits of the ingrained malefactor. The larrikin class are treated as at Darlinghurst, and the governor claimed that the exceptional severity of this particular discipline was a success, as those troublesome subjects evinced no disposition to return, at least to Bathurst.

A very sensible religious arrangement, which obtains in some of the smaller towns in Switzerland, has been adopted in the planning of Bathurst prison. The traveller in the little Federal Republic, who may sorrow over sectarian animosities in Great Britain and Ireland, will find some solace in discovering in these Swiss towns the best possible proof of the non-existence of such unchristian feeling in the use of a one-church building for all the religions of the town or village. The largest congregation have the choice of hour for their services, and the others follow in agreed rotation. This most Christian and rational plan works admirably, and begets a feeling of religious toleration such as ought to exist among all creeds and classes professedly Christian. Bathurst prison has adopted this idea, and its religious services—Protestant and Catholic—are all conducted in one chapel. These services occur only on Sunday. There are no prison chaplains, and no salaries are paid for the religious ministrations to prisoners.

The annual cost of the police and the prisons of New South Wales will afford matter for comparison with similar expenditure in England. Mr. Coghlan gives the following information in his most useful work :—

“The following figures show the amount expended in maintaining the police and prison services during the last year, and also the amount of fines paid into the Consolidated Revenue, and the net return from prison labour :—

Expenditure and Revenue, 1895.—Expenditure—Police, £333,110; \* Penal establishment, £134,292; Total, £467,402. Revenue—Fines, £12,443; Net return from prison labour, £21,817; Total, £34,260. Net Expenditure, £433,142. Per Inhabitant, 6s. 10d.

\* Financial year 1895-6.

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“The amounts set down above as the value of prison labour have been reduced, as it was found that, in addition to the value of the labour employed in producing articles for outside disposal, or for use in the government service, or employed in the construction or improvement of prison buildings, and, therefore, possessing a monetary value to the state, it had been the practice to set down a certain sum for unproductive services. As they are now presented, the figures only represent the labour of a productive character.” \*

Finally, a comparison in serious crime between the seven colonies, as shown by the relative number of convictions in Superior Courts, may be of some interest.

“The convictions after trial in the Superior Courts of Australasia, for the year 1895, were as follows :—

Colony.	Convictions in Superior Courts.	
	Number.	Per 100,000 of Population.
New South Wales . . . . .	871	69
Victoria . . . . .	403	34
Queensland . . . . .	245	54
South Australia . . . . .	100	28
Western Australia . . . . .	59	64
Tasmania . . . . .	32	20
New Zealand . . . . .	344	50
Australasia . . . . .	2,054	49”

\* *Wealth and Progress of New South Wales, 1895-6, vol. i. p. 413.*

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

### VICTORIAN PRISONS

PENTRIDGE, the chief prison of Victoria, is, in some respects, modelled upon the present English penal system. In it are combined a few of the most objectionable English features with the best of the new Australian methods of dealing with criminals. There is the absence of rational classification of criminal degrees and ages, which is yet, to some extent at least, a conspicuous fault in British and Irish prisons. Solitary and silence are also included in the Pentridge dispensation, but only for a period extending from three to six months after sentence; an advance, however, upon the nine months' solitary probation and eternal silence of Dartmoor, Portland, etc. This applies to prisoners who are sentenced to two or more years' imprisonment. First offenders who receive six months or less have to pass the whole time in solitary and silence, unless otherwise ordered on medical grounds. Dark cells for the punishment of insubordination are not now as much in vogue at Pentridge as formerly, and I was glad to learn this from the courteous Inspector-General, with whom I visited these torture-chambers, when going over the prison. Every particle of light is excluded, while all noise is effectively deadened through special structural arrangements. I was told by Captain Evans that no prisoner is now left more than a few hours in these cells, and that they are only thus resorted to, in extreme cases, by way of admonition. Flogging is also another English method retained from the diabolical "convictism" of the "old times."

There are six grades or classes through which a prisoner must go while working out a sentence of two years or upwards at Pentridge. The qualification for these classes is regulated, somewhat as in England, by the earning of marks. Every sentence is reduced to a certain number of marks, the possible maximum per day being twelve; nine of which will stand for an ordinary day; three for labour, three for conduct while at work,

three for conduct outside of task hours, and three for exceptional all-round behaviour. The total remission that can be earned in this way amounts to nearly one-third. No remission is allowed for the period spent in model (separate) confinement after sentence, during which no more than nine marks can be earned. The time of detention in "model" depends on the length of sentence, the minimum being two, the maximum six months.

Though shorter by three months than the English probationary period in separate confinement in sentences of equal length, the Pentridge system is on wrong lines, proceeding, as it does, like its prototype, on the principle of mechanical intimidation. Caging a man for twenty-three hours out of every twenty-four will, of course, punish him most severely, but will never make him a better man while human nature remains what it is. It must necessarily be hurtful to both mind and body, while it likewise promotes, in its enforced isolation and silence, that brooding habit and irritability of temperament which are the moods and dispositions most favourable to the keeping in active operation of those criminal mental habits which regular industry and rational association are more likely to kill or cure by healthier trains of thought. The work done during "model" confinement at Pentridge is chiefly wool and oakum picking. Prisoners who are first-timers, and who are qualified for the labour, can be employed in keeping the books of the prison, and in similar clerical occupation. This is a decided advance upon the rigid exclusion of all prisoners from such work in England. The cells are on the whole better than in home prisons, while prisoners are allowed the privilege of mending their own clothes, and are given for this purpose such luxuries as needles, thread, patches, etc., the possession of any of which in an English prison would entail a punishment of bread and water.

Beyond "model" or solitary the Pentridge system departs a good deal from the English, and proceeds upon the more rational plan of reforming by regulated industry, earnable privileges, and small indulgences. By the time he has done half his sentence, a prisoner can claim, as a result of the stipulated progress in industry and behaviour, a pipe of tobacco every day, an extra small ration of sugar, and one or two more privileges, including talking. Naturally this right of talking is most coveted by prisoners after months of enforced silence. To make it an earnable privilege is the next best rule to one that would not penalise so human a function in even an erring mortal. The desire to possess these indulgences at



a certain period of imprisonment is the strongest possible incentive to exemplary attention to work-tasks and disciplinary regulations. Should a prisoner at Pentridge not care for the daily pipe of tobacco, he can have the value of it added to his gratuity at the end of his sentence.

Another most favourable comparison with the English system is seen in the dietary allowances of the Australian prisons. In this respect the rules of all the prisons which I visited told the same story. The rations at Pentridge, for a compliance with the ordinary prison and labour regulations are as follows, per day: 20 ozs. of bread, 8 ozs. of maize or oaten meal, 12 ozs. of meat, 16 ozs. of potatoes, 1 oz. of sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of soap, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of salt. This far exceeds in liberality the dietary scale of English prisons. In the items of meat and meal the difference is as between four ounces of meat and two of meal compared with the quantities mentioned above. Dietary punishment is resorted to at Pentridge as in England for insubordination and laziness, and rightly so, when not carried to barbarous extremes; but the refined practice of semi-starvation, which forms part of the English "model system" of criminal reformation, has not been copied at Pentridge.

What pleased me most at Pentridge were the workshops. In construction and arrangement they are everything which a prison planned and governed on enlightened principles should be; indeed, they would favourably compare in some respects with places of free labour employment. There are printing and book-binding offices, joinery, iron-foundry, blacksmithing, woollen-weaving, mat and brush making, all in their separate places; superintended not by warders, as in England, but by trained civil industrial overseers, who have practically sole charge of the prisoners during the hours of labour. The duty assigned to the warder is to look on from a convenient distance and see that no disorder takes place. The Inspector-General spoke very highly of the beneficial effects of these workshops, and of the labour spirit which they are calculated to create in prisoners who pass through them. It is a practice with him to encourage men who have learned any of the trades carried on at Pentridge to go on discharge to places noted for that particular industry. In this way there is every inducement given to the liberated prisoner to profit by what he has practised while in gaol, and to keep away from the place and influences associated with the crime for which he was punished.

There were one hundred prisoners at work on a farm and

gardens comprising an extent of about one hundred and ten acres attached to the prison. No employment is better adapted, in my humble judgment, to criminal reformation than spade and general agricultural labour. It has also the additional recommendation that it is the one form of industry which least excites that very natural, but at the same time narrow and inconsiderate, feeling of opposition to the competition of prison produce on the part of skilled artisans. The tendency in all countries now is in the direction of enlarging this field of work for criminals, and it is a happy and hopeful change from the dungeon-in-towns idea of punishing wrong-doers to put them out at forced apprenticeship with nature in the fields and forests. It is matter of some surprise that the Australians have not done more of this than one sees in the small farms attached to a few of their prisons. No countries in the civilized family of nations can boast of a greater proportion of land to population than the colonies. It will probably reach a thousand acres to the individual. There could therefore be no possible difficulty in procuring land enough in any part of any colony on which to plant an agricultural prison for the healthy and profitable occupation of the comparatively small number of criminals. Land reclamation, irrigation, clearing mallee scrub, making roads, and kindred work of permanent usefulness to the country would surely look more sensible, result in greater benefit to the state and in better moral results to the criminal himself, than the cooping of him up within the walls of city prisons, in fetish compliance with the old barbarous ideas of putting your offender in something akin to a cage, and on limited work, food, air, and sunshine, so as to punish him into a more moral state of mind.

I saw all the prisoners at work during my visit to Pentridge. It struck me that the criminal traits were not as marked as in an English prison. There are a larger proportion of mere "ne'er-do-weels" turned criminals than obtains in England or in countries into whose standing armies "failures" of all kinds drift as an occupation of refuge needing little brains or capacity for earning a livelihood. The Australians have no moral salvage institution of this kind yet, and lazy and shiftless characters, "larrikins," and loafers generally, wanting an outlet of this kind, drift into felony and prison. These classes of men are not of a recidivist type, and would, in my humble opinion, become reclaimable if the Pentridge system could be "spread out," as it were, and made more agricultural. If it offered more inducements for reform to prisoners, in grants of land and suitable opportunities after

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discharge, say, in small homestead settlements, with the additional aid of state advances, it would be more successful still in reforming criminal dispositions.

There is a praiseworthy spirit of humanity exhibited at Pentridge in the treatment of female prisoners. Their cells are better lighted and more "comfortable" (if such a word can be applied to anything connected with imprisonment) than those of the other sex. The work, too, is congenial (knitting, washing, wool picking, and straw-envelope making) for women, and I was glad to hear that there was no oakum-picking punishment resorted to. The "hopeful cases" are located apart altogether from the old criminals, and everything that can be done to confirm them in industrial habits and good resolutions is carefully carried out. Certain lady visitors are allowed to come and talk to these well-conducted prisoners at any time inside of prison hours, and the lady-warder told me that the best possible results followed from this sympathetic human attention on the part of such visitors, who are recommended for that work by the various ministers of religion in Melbourne. They solace their fallen sisters by this evidence of kindness, and make them more amenable to prison discipline and more reformable in disposition. This system of reclaiming casual female criminals was adopted on the initiative of Captain Evans, and merits, by its results, being adopted in every female prison.

The prison statistics of Victoria are creditable to a colony of over a million of population. The total number of prisoners in 1894 was fourteen hundred and twenty-eight, distributed over the eight prisons of Pentridge, Melbourne, Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat, Castlemaine, Beechworth, and Maryborough. This number gives something over one per thousand of total population.

The ratio of insane prisoners is much smaller in Victoria than in English prisons. This is due to the less severe character of the discipline, the better food, and the system of employing criminals at rational industry. Out of thirty-three men and three women reported as insane in 1894, it is averred by the prison authorities that the disease originated anterior to imprisonment in all but four cases. Twenty-three of the number were forwarded on committal from Melbourne gaol to appropriate asylums. These were casual police cases of short sentences, and the malady showed itself before cell confinement really began. Taking the thirteen remaining instances,

they form a very small percentage to fourteen hundred of a prison population, and are a marked contrast to the lunacy statistics of English prisons.

The practice of recommending "hopeful cases" for transfer to benevolent institutions prevails in Victorian prisons, and reflects much credit upon their administration. A total of twenty-eight prisoners were so liberated in 1894 on the recommendation of the Inspector-General. This rule is a most enlightened one, and would, if judiciously acted upon in the case of first offenders, before the hardening process of imprisonment began to corrode the remnant of moral stamina in the criminal, leave less of recidivism to record in annual prison reports.

The prison staffs of Victoria are badly paid, and get no pensions. The non-pensioning of warders would call for no comment if it were the result of a healthy rule against the principle of pensions; but this is not so. Government officials here, as in England, are paid and pensioned; but the unhappy class of men who have to become, as it were, semi-imprisoned themselves in the service of the state are denied this reward. Nor is their pay regulated on a scale to compensate them for this deprivation. The warders' wages in Victoria are less than those of an ordinary skilled artisan. This niggardly treatment of a most deserving class of public servants is unworthy of such a colony.

## CHAPTER LXXX.

### GEELONG PRISON

GEELONG, in Victoria, has a semi-invalid prison with accommodation for about two hundred prisoners. There were some one hundred and sixty there at the time of my visit, and these were kept in control by a staff comprising a governor, chief warder, and nine assistant warders; or one officer to sixteen prisoners—a small official roll compared with English prisons. The cells are well lighted and roomy, being about eight feet square. Prisoners are in association during the day—whether at work or at exercise—and mess together in an open shed in one of the yards, which looked a most common-sense arrangement. Old prisoners sleep in dormitories, and young ones in separate cells. There are no mattresses or hammocks in the cells, but prisoners have three rugs or blankets for bedding purposes. Talking is allowed in moderation at both work and meals. On asking to be shown to the punishment cells I was gratified to learn that they had practically been done away with, as dark-cell penalties were not now inflicted. This more lenient discipline may be due to the invalid character of the gaol, as dark-cell punishment is in vogue at Pentridge and other Victorian prisons.

The rations are scaled on the generous rule which I found obtain in every Australian prison, and include porridge, with both milk and sugar, for breakfast, and one pound of bread, twelve ounces of beef or mutton, one pound of potatoes, and tea (at a certain stage of the sentence) for the other daily meals. Prisoners cook all the food, and without the constant attendance of warders as in English prisons. Some trust is placed in well-conducted men, and it is seemingly not abused. I found the food of good quality, particularly the bread.

There is a small annual allowance for chaplains, divided according to the number of prisoners, and ministers of all religions and officers from the Salvation Army can visit prisoners



and attend to their religious wants at certain times in the week, or whenever sent for. There are no salaried schoolmasters. Prisoners who wish to do so can teach illiterates in the open yard or in the dormitories. There is a small library with a prisoner in charge of it, and a good selection of interesting books, including novels.

There is not much of an attempt at a classification of the criminals at Geelong. First offenders are confined in separate cells for six months or less, and are not allowed to talk when at exercise. Old offenders, who are the great majority in this prison, are permitted to associate as described above. A visiting magistrate tries all prisoners for breaches of discipline. No prison official assumes this duty as in Great Britain and Ireland. This salutary rule is also general in Australian prisons. There is no flogging in this prison.

Remissions of sentences are earned as in Pentridge. There is a small gratuity earnable also, which goes to prisoners on discharge. There was a very large percentage of recidivists in this prison, and judging from their faces they were of the seemingly hardened or irreclaimable class of criminals.

The governor has no deputy. The medical officer is permitted to have a private practice in addition to his labours in the prison, an arrangement very necessary in the case of an officer receiving no more than a carpenter's wages for his skill and time in the service of the state.

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PRISONS

THE Stockade, or convict prison at Adelaide, is some eight miles distant from the city, at a place called Yatala, and stands on rising ground in a position which commands a fine view of the sea and the plains. Yatala is an agricultural district, and the prison is surrounded by farms and farming land. I was glad to note the absence of all external show or ornamentation at the Stockade. Nothing can well be more absurd than to make the outside of a gaol in any way attractive-looking. It is as hideously incongruous as foolishly expensive. The present prison was built by convict labour on the site of the old Stockade, and has room for about five hundred. The cells are not as large as in the prisons of the other colonies, and average only about five feet by eight. They are, however, high, and give about an equal amount of cubic air space. All prisoners sleep in their cells, there being no dormitories or sleeping in association. There is no attempt of any kind at a classification of criminals. All are worked in indiscriminate association, young and old, recidivists and first-timers. This bad plan is defended on the ground that the prisoners are too few to permit of any such arrangement consistent with the necessary working of the prison. But this defence will not hold water. There were one hundred and fifty-five prisoners in the Stockade at the time of my visit. According to the books of the prison, which I was allowed to inspect, there were sixty-two first-timers, thirty-one with second convictions, twelve with third, and fifty having a fourth or more sentences marked in their records. I saw nothing in the labour or discipline of the prison which required the mixing up of the old with the new offenders. On the contrary, I would venture to say that a division, in labour and association, on these four lines would serve the purposes of the prison as well as the helter-skelter rule which had nothing but its want of system to recommend it.

Prisoners work from 6 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with allowances for meals. They come in for breakfast at 8.30. All meals are eaten in the cells. The labour is chiefly quarrying, there being a good building stone found near the Stockade. This stone is sold to the public. There are 200 acres of good land attached to the prison, but not enclosed within its boundary walls. Only a little of this land is worked by the prisoners, which is, I think, a pity. There are a few of the sedentary industries carried on inside the place, such as tailoring and shoemaking, but only with the object of finding light employment for invalids in providing for the needs of the prison in these matters. Daily rations are even on a more liberal scale than what obtains in other colonial prisons. Men at hard labour (quarrying and farm work) receive  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. of bread, 1 lb. of meat, 1 lb. of potatoes,  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of tea, 2 ozs. of sugar, 2 ozs. of rice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of salt, and a  $\frac{1}{4}$  oz. of tobacco. Light labour diet is less in bread and meat by half a pound respectively, but the same in the other items. I found the food as good as the ordinary food of artisans outside. The bread for this prison is baked in Adelaide. This needless extravagance was defended on the ground that "it would not pay to bake it in the prison!" presumably because labour is so cheap in Adelaide and so dear in the Stockade!

It was a good evidence of the fair treatment of the prisoners to find the warders without truncheons or side arms. This would not be a prudent policy if any undue harshness was practised in the disciplinary regulations. The criminals of the colonies are as desperate in disposition as those of England, but it would not be wise or safe for warders to mix with their prisoners unarmed in Portland, Chatham, or Dartmoor. Fair and humane treatment makes all the difference between a violent convict and a peaceful one, and this accounts for the different risks to warders in Portland and in the Yatala Stockade. There are no watch towers on the walls of this prison as on those in some of the other colonies. Civil guards attend the outside working parties, and are armed with rifles as in English convict prisons.

Baths are allowed as a privilege by the doctor, and not as a sanitary regulation. This is doubtless some rule handed down from the earlier Stockade period, when the cleanliness of prisoners was a matter of little concern to anybody. This restriction, I am happy to say, was the only instance of the kind which came under my notice in any of the colonies. There are no chaplains or schoolmasters attached to Yatala. Ministers can visit prisoners at stated times and hold services on Sunday, but they are not

privileged to carry keys as in Great Britain. No attempt is made to give instruction to illiterates. The place is called "The Labour Prison," and the belief obtains that rational daily labour with a humane disciplinary treatment in return is about the best kind of instruction that can be offered to criminals. All offences against the rules are tried by a visiting magistrate. The governor has only power to remand a prisoner and put him on a reduced (but not a punishment) diet until the magistrate comes and adjudicates on the case. Dark-cell punishment obtains, but the maximum period is limited to eight hours. Flogging also is inflicted for serious offences, but I was told that it was very rarely resorted to. Separate cells, with stone-breaking tasks in yards attached to such cells, is the general form of punishment, and extends from one to seven days, in accordance with the nature of the breach of discipline. Bread-and-water punishment is also imposed, with loss of marks and of the daily allowance of tobacco for a number of days or weeks, as the case may determine. Prisoners are searched daily on parade and at night in their cells, as in English public works prisons. They are employed in positions of trust by the governor, and have charge of prison stores, library, work the prison engine, and other responsibilities for which salaries are paid to civilians in England. Only exceptionally well-conducted men are placed in these billets. A prisoner-librarian goes round to his fellow-prisoners every Saturday and distributes such books as the small prison library contains. I noticed some of George Eliot's novels on the shelves. I was glad to find that talking was allowed both at work and on parade. This is one more explanation why warders manage their charges without the aid of truncheons. It is only when natural rights are stupidly repressed and men are sought to be reduced to the disciplinary level of beasts that their worst natures are appealed to, and naturally beget the violence which calls for the protection of bludgeons, and accounts for the comparatively large number of punishments recorded in English gaols.

Remissions of sentences are earned, as in the other colonies and in England, by the marks system. There is, however, no ticket-of-leave imposed on discharge. This is yet another enlightened improvement upon the English system. A discharged prisoner is, however, required to remain within the colony for a year after the expiration of his sentence, or he incurs a penalty of two years' imprisonment. This is for the protection of neighbouring colonies against habitual criminals.

Two pounds and a free railway journey to any part of the colony a discharged prisoner wishes to go to are given on liberation. The cost of working the Yatala prison amounts to an average of £26 per convict annually. This is less than the *per capita* expenditure of English convict prisons, and the reason is obvious from the difference between the two systems. There are less warders and less prison clerks in Yatala, owing to the better treatment of and confidence in the prisoners. It costs four or five pounds less a year on each prisoner to be humanely considerate in applying the penal remedies of the law. There are, for the same reasons, less recidivists than where silence and bludgeons, scientifically-prevented starvation, and big-salaried prison commissioners unite in failing to morally reclaim a single criminal who graduates in the penal institutions of England.

In looking over the prison books I was interested in the religion and nationalities of the prisoners. I found them classed as follows:—Church of England, 98; Roman Catholic, 24; Lutheran, 10; Presbyterian, 4; and one Jew. Born in the Australian colonies, 53; in England and Wales, 41; Ireland, 13; Scotland, 7; other parts of the world, 3.

The impressions left on my mind, after a thorough investigation into the working of the Yatala prison, were most favourable, except in the one important particular of classification. Agricultural work could also be extended with advantage both to prisoners and prison. The warders are not paid a fair wage. This I found to be the rule all over Australia. There is certainly room for improvement here, as the work and the worry of prison officials demand, in commonest justice, a higher pay than where there are no such responsibilities and temptations included in the every-day callings of the service.

South Australia has not abolished capital punishment, but from the enlightened rule which obtains in relation to such sentences it may be said to be travelling in that direction. The extreme penalty of the law is not inflicted until the final sanction of the Executive Council is given. This is also the practice now in the other colonies. This Council corresponds with the Cabinet in England, and is, in fact, the government. The judge who passes the sentence is required to attend the meeting of the Council summoned to consider the carrying out of the law, when the final decision for or against the execution of the culprit is taken. The judge is required to sign the warrant for execution if the death penalty has been decreed. The barbarous example of the other





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colonies, in the matter of keeping condemned criminals in chains night and day from sentence to execution, obtains in South Australia also. There has not been an execution in this colony, however, for the last fourteen years.

## CHAPTER LXXXII.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PRISONS

THE Fremantle (Western Australia) prison, once the Imperial "Establishment," stands within the city, and looks in all its surroundings the place one would picture these pre-self-government gaols to be. It is built of a greyish stone found in the locality, and has a "warm" appearance when the sun beats down upon its bleached walls, as it generally does in this sub-tropical climate. But I would find it hard, after an experience of Dartmoor, to consider the sun as an unwelcome visitor to a prisoner. It is now the chief convict prison in Western Australia. It has an average of some 200 prisoners, including about a dozen old "Imperialist" convicts who have worked out their sentences, but who choose to remain where so much of their lives have been spent in preference to going back to England, where there are now no friends to be found. The cost of the keep of these men (and of a larger number of similar prisoners at Hobart, Tasmania) is a charge upon the Imperial government, and is voted as a separate item in the Estimates every session. I spoke to these old "laggs," and they had nothing to complain of. Their diet was a little more generous than that of the other prisoners, and they are allowed to go out into the town when they want, but must be back at the usual closing-up hours in the evening.

This is the only colony of the seven which petitioned the Imperial government for convict labour, and it is worth noting that the advance of the colony from its early stagnant period may be dated from the landing of the first batch of transported prisoners at Fremantle in 1850. The cheap labour thus obtained was applied to road-making, bridge-building, and similar necessary public works, while the farmers and traders found the nucleus of a market for their produce in the requirements of the invited guests. Some ten thousand convicts were sent out in all, and at

the end of twenty years the further shipment of the criminal cargoes was stopped at the request of the colonists. In fact, the consignment of 1868, of which the Fenian prisoners were part, was the last that was landed in Australia. There was a very strong feeling in Fremantle against the landing of this final instalment of prisoners, but it was mainly directed, I believe, towards the Fenian or political element, who were more objectionable to the loyalist population than the benefactors of the colony who were only common malefactors.

The prison is a clean and healthy-looking one, and is on the separate cell system. These cells are four feet by seven and nine high, and are well lighted. They rise in tiers from a huge central hall, as in most modern prisons. The chief labour of the prison is outside work, such as road-building, harbour-making, and quarrying, with some inside industries for feebler convicts. The scale of diet is liberal, and corresponds in this respect with the other Australian prisons. The only attempt at classification is the separating of young from old criminals. Talking is allowed at work. There are no schoolmasters and no chaplains. Ministers of religion have access to prisoners and have Sunday services. No gratuities are earnable or given on discharge. Exemplary conduct earns a remission of sentence, but there is no ticket-of-leave imposed. The governor told me he placed no restrictions upon letters. He humanely allowed prisoners to be in communication with their friends in the belief that this promoted the moral good of the convict through the continuance of the home or family influence in correspondence. I find no mention of a daily tobacco allowance in the notes of my visit to the prison. I believe the governor told me it had been deemed necessary to stop it, so as to put an end to the trafficking which it caused.

Dark cells and some other bad regulations from the Imperialist days are still retained. A prisoner can be sentenced to seven days of total darkness for certain offences which are dealt with in some other colonial prisons by a bread-and-water punishment. At the end of three days the punishment is relieved, for an hour, by incarceration in a less dark cell! This is a most inhuman and needlessly brutal punishment, without an atom of reason or of disciplinary need for its retention. This prison and those of New South Wales are exceptions among scores of equally well-disciplined Australian gaols, which get along without the application of the torture of darkness. Western Australia also retains the equally barbarous practice of loading condemned criminals with chains until a few minutes before execution.

## FREMANTLE PRISON

The chain and "cat" room at Fremantle is an instructive place to peep into. All the irons and cats used in the "old days" are preserved for the inspection of visitors. Some of these leg and body chains weigh over forty pounds! Prisoners who attempted to escape or were guilty of equally serious prison offences had to wear such chains day and night without any relief during the period of extra punishment.

The city of Fremantle owes a great deal to its convict prison, and a supply of good water is numbered among the obligations. The prison was erected on a rocky foundation, and a small subterranean river of excellent water was discovered during its construction. This water is pumped up by a prison engine, and is sent through the mains to the houses of the citizens. In the "old" days of fifteen years ago the work of pumping was done by prisoners. A small pump of that period still remains, and unruly prisoners are put to this task, which is not at all to their liking. A visiting magistrate tries insubordinate prisoners. The governor has no power to inflict punishment.

## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

### ESCAPE OF JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY

A VISIT to the prison at Fremantle was an exceptionally interesting one for many reasons to me. Some sixty Fenian prisoners had been deported to Western Australia in 1868, and most of them were located for a time in this prison. Among them were John Flood, now of Gympie, Queensland, and John Boyle O'Reilly, who died a few years ago, mourned by the whole Irish race. Mr. Flood had been the leader of the Fenian contingent which was to have captured Chester Castle in February, 1867, but didn't. Like many of us who engaged in that interesting enterprise, penal servitude captured Flood instead. We met again twenty-eight years afterwards, when he acted as the chairman of my lecture at Gympie. O'Reilly became one of my warmest friends after both of us had learned in many prisons how England can repay with a vengeance those who attempt to dispute her right to rule in Ireland, and in going the rounds of the "Establishment" at Fremantle the courteous governor satisfied an expressed wish of mine to see the cells in which my two friends had been located. They were much lighter cells than mine had been in Dartmoor. There was more light and less of iron barring and bolting, it seemed.

In connection with the rise and record of Westralian gold mines, it is of some interest to note the fact that the first prediction made as to this colony becoming a great goldfield was contained in O'Reilly's delightful story *Moondyne*, published in 1878. This romance of colonial prison life was largely founded on the author's own experiences, but it also embodied some of those of many of the convicts with whom he was thrown into association. The governor of the prison told me there had been a real "Moondyne Joe," a fellow-prisoner of O'Reilly's, and I was shown his cell also, which was quite near to that of him who was subsequently to immortalise the name. This man Moondyne had led a wild life, and was for a time with the natives in the



Kimberley regions. He had told O'Reilly, in relating his adventures, of having found gold while roaming round that northern country, and it was on this information O'Reilly founded the prediction fully realized some few years afterwards by the discovery of the yellow metal along the tributaries of the Fitzroy, which caused the first rush to Westralia of the fortune seekers who have since raised it into one of the leading gold-mining centres of the world.

There probably never lived a more fascinating individuality than John Boyle O'Reilly. It is related of a prominent British politician and scientist, now a peer, that once while on a visit to Boston he was taken by his host to the Papyrus Club, the centre of the literary lights of that city. The guest found himself the dinner-companion of a man strikingly handsome, who talked upon every subject with the ease and information of a widely-read and cultured mind. Poetry, art, literature, science, politics, everything which the British savant and statesman touched upon in his conversation, found a responsive interpreter in the brilliant man to whom he had not, by some oversight, been introduced. In driving home afterwards with his host he asked who the gentleman was with whom he had been talking all the evening. "Your companion to-night was the most popular man of our club, and probably of Boston—a man whom your British government once treated as a common convict, Mr. John Boyle O'Reilly," was the reply. It is said that the distinguished visitor declared he had never met a more accomplished or delightful personage.

The story of O'Reilly's escape from Bunbury has often been told, but not in papers or publications familiar to British or to most Australian readers. It is wanting in none of the elements of romantic adventure, while its success led to the subsequent daring and equally romantic rescue of six of his imprisoned comrades from the prison at Fremantle. No man or woman could resist the magnetic charms of O'Reilly's personality, and no power on earth could keep him down so long as his great mental resources had a chance to assert themselves. He enlisted as a boy in the British army, and his winning ways soon found him favour among the officers of the Hussar regiment to which he belonged in Dublin; privileges which he turned to the account of the revolutionary cause after joining the Fenian movement. He was arrested and tried by court martial with many more military Fenians in 1866, and sentenced to death, the penalty being subsequently mitigated to one of twenty

years' penal servitude. One of the informers who gave evidence against him chanced, in after years, to find himself without a friend or a cent in the city of Boston. He went to the man whom he had helped to consign to a convict's fate, then one of the most honoured men of that city, and at once obtained that assistance which was never denied to any sufferer who sought it from the big, tender heart of O'Reilly. Shortly after being consigned to Chatham prison he was detected in a plan for an attempted escape, and, after being duly punished, was transferred to Portsmouth. He was no sooner settled down to the tasks of his new prison than he was once again busy on projects of prison-breaking, which led to more punishment and to another change, the worst of all, from the mild climate and comparative humanity of Portsea to the cold and hunger and pitiless discipline of Dartmoor. O'Reilly has left on record his views of this horrible dungeon, from which he had also made a most daring but ineffectual attempt to get free:—

"In October, '67," he writes,\* "there were in Dartmoor prison six convicts (five military Fenian companions), who, to judge from their treatment, must have been infinitely darker criminals than even the murderous-looking wretches around them. These men were distinguished by being allotted an extra amount of work, hunger, cold, and curses, together with a thousand bitter aids that are brought to bear in the enforcement of English prison discipline. At the time I now recall three of those men were down in the social depths—indeed, with one exception, they were in prison for life, and even in prison were considered as the most guilty and degraded there. This unusually harsh course was the result of a dream they had been dreaming since conviction—dreaming as they had wheeled the heavy brick barrows, as they hewed the frozen granite, and as they breathed on their cold fingers in the dark and damp penal cells, dreaming in the deep swamp drain, awake and asleep, always dreaming of liberty. That thought had never left them. They had more than once attempted to realize it, and had failed. But the wild, stealthy thought would come back into their hearts and be cherished there. This was the result—hunger, cold, and curses. The excitement even of failure was dead when a rumour came to the prison, even to the dark cells, of a sailing ship to Australia."

I remember, some nine years afterwards, when undergoing punishment in one of these same darkened cells—a punishment which was awarded me, strangely enough, on account of the rescue of some of O'Reilly's companions from Fremantle—finding on the iron door the letters "J. B. O'R., 20 yrs."

From Dartmoor to Western Australia was like going from prison to liberty, and the bright, buoyant, poetic temperament of O'Reilly revelled in the fortunate change. He had the com-

\* *Life of O'Reilly*, by JAMES JEFFREY ROCHE.

panionship of some sixty other Fenian prisoners on the voyage out, and was the life of the company with his cheery hopefulness, unflinching spirits, and dauntless disposition. In his story of *Moondyne* he paints in a single sentence a vivid picture of the prison ship on the transportation journey. "Only those who have stood within the bars and heard the din of devils and the appalling sounds of despair, blended in a diapason that made every hatch-mouth a vent of hell, can imagine the horrors of the hold of a convict ship." The voyage and its experiences over O'Reilly found himself in the warm sunny climate of Fremantle, with the sea air to breathe, and road-making as a rational daily occupation. It would be impossible for O'Reilly to be anywhere on earth where human beings congregated without making friends. His handsome face and dark and laughing eyes, his manly bearing and his sunny disposition, with good feeling running from every pore of his nature like refreshing water from a perennial spring, set prison rules and warders' frowns at defiance, and ultimately enabled him to carry out his sleepless resolve to escape.

What was intended as a precaution for his safe custody, a removal from Fremantle to Bunbury a year after arriving from Dartmoor, gave O'Reilly a far better chance of getting away than the larger prison in the chief port of the colony would have offered. He had, of course, his plan of escape in this as in all his previous prisons, but in Bunbury he had a freedom of movement for his purpose which amounted to comparative liberty. The prison "walls" here were the sea on the one hand, with hungry sharks as warders, and the wild bush on the other, with the chances of dying of starvation if not hunted down by black trackers, as an alternative fate. But neither sea, nor sharks, nor bush could terrorize O'Reilly, nor kill the "dream" which had nerved him to so many daring but hitherto fruitless attempts to regain his freedom. He succeeded in winning the confidence of the warder in charge of the road-making gang at Bunbury, and was placed in a post of trust. He helped the officer to write his reports, regulated the business of the convict stores, and was privileged to become the bearer of reports from one depôt to another. In these journeys he attracted the ardent attention of a young girl, daughter of a warden, who conceived a strong attachment for the handsome young rebel, whose convict dress could not disfigure the fine physique and manly bearing of the prisoner. Those who have written the stories of O'Reilly's escape have given all the credit for the help which enabled him to reach the friendly shelter of the *Gaselle* to Father McCabe, Mr. Maguire,

and another male friend. I was assured when in Fremantle that the girl to whom I refer had shown great devotion to O'Reilly, whose plan of escape he had confided to her and obtained her help to put it into execution, and that it was in a disguise prepared by her he rode from Bunbury to where the Maguires awaited him with the further necessary aid for the success of the scheme. To the good priest Father McCabe, however, belongs the honour of having thought out a better and safer plan than that which O'Reilly had at first thought of—a dash at the bush—and it was he who also enlisted the hearty and invaluable assistance of Maguire in the business. It had been arranged by Father McCabe with the captain of one of three American whalers, calling in the whaling season at Fremantle, to hover round in Geographe Bay at a given time and to pick up O'Reilly, who was to make for the open sea in a small boat to be provided by his friends.

For two or three months after this plan had been decided upon nothing was heard by O'Reilly from his trusted friends. He was almost on the point of putting his own desperate scheme to the test when word reached him from Maguire that all had been arranged for a given day. The captain of a New Bedford whaler, who had been enlisted in the humane work of rescue by faithful Father McCabe, promised to look out for and pick O'Reilly's boat up if found outside the limit of Australian waters. Equipped with the suit of clothes provided by the devoted warden's daughter, he made for the track through the bush, some three hours' distance, to the place where it was arranged Maguire and he were to meet. Here he was joined by Maguire and other friends with horses, and no time was lost in galloping through to the point on the coast, some twenty miles away, from whence it was decided to launch the boat and make for the offing. Everything had been so well planned by Maguire that a boat soon rounded the place where the fugitive was waiting, and in a short time O'Reilly found himself being rapidly rowed by four willing oars towards the open sea. The course taken through the bush had been with the object of throwing trackers off the scent, as the place agreed upon for the boat to put off from was quite close to Bunbury, opposite to which the *Vigilant* was to lay on the *qui vive* for the escaping prisoner.

It took all the hours of the night and morning to cover the thirty or forty miles beyond which they would be clear of Australian waters, and on reaching that position with the oarsmen



well tired they looked in vain for the expected ship. Unluckily no food or water had been provided for the six men in the boat, and this oversight, together with the failure of the *Vigilant* to put in an appearance, led to the forced return of the boat to the shore. The usual bad luck which had dogged all O'Reilly's plans of escape seemed to follow him still, but his courage never failed. In the desperate emergency of the new situation Maguire resolved upon risking a good deal of their chances by calling upon an English convict, whose hut chanced to be near where the boat had to be beached, and asking him for refreshments. Food and drink were readily obtained from the friendly lagg, and the night was passed with the fears of trackers on the one hand, and that the morning might still bring no sight of the rescuing ship. Weary watching was, however, rewarded with the gleam of sails on the horizon, and the boat was once more headed towards the point where all their hopes were fixed. But ill-fortune still pursued that "dream." They got within a short distance of the *Vigilant*, hailed her again and again, to see her once or twice make as if answering their anxious signals, and then to their dismay to find her tacking round and making for the open ocean. It is not difficult to picture the feelings of O'Reilly and his devoted friends as once more they turned their boat shorewards, and faced the growing probabilities of recapture and its consequences all round. On getting back to land it was agreed to take the friendly lagg who lived in the hut into their confidence, confide O'Reilly to his protection, and arrange for the good offices of some other American whaler at Fremantle.

A hiding place among sandhills was fixed upon by O'Reilly, and the English convict brought him food and drink, or sent his boy with it when he could not perform the kind office himself. A week went by, and there being no message from his friends, O'Reilly resolved upon risking an effort of his own to find the ship which he convinced himself was still hovering somewhere in Geographe Bay to pick him up. He found an old boat a few miles down the beach, repaired her, and resolved upon venturing in even so frail a barque to search for the *Vigilant*. For a whole day and night he lay out some twenty miles from land watching for the vessel, which he finally sighted, and felt that his hopes were at last realized. But it was not to be as yet. He got so close to the ship that he could see the man on the look-out and hear the orders of the officer in charge, but though he shouted for help no notice was taken of him. The ship veered away and left him as if she had only been a phantom vision of his "dream"



of liberation. Back to the shore again, with hope almost dead, but with courage still at the helm, he went, after having been forty-eight hours out in the Indian Ocean in his cockle-shell of a craft. He once more found the sheltering hospitality of the English convict, and awaited some tidings from Maguire. In a week's time patience and hope were alike rewarded in the return of this most loyal of friends, and in the news that Father McCabe had secured the willing help of Captain Gifford of the *Gazelle*, also of New Bedford, who undertook to do his best to pick the fugitive up on the following day outside British waters.

Maguire's suspicious movements had, however, been observed by a convict at large in Bunbury, who suspected him of being engaged in helping O'Reilly to escape, and he coolly threatened to give the whole plot away to the authorities unless his rescue was also undertaken. There was no alternative but to accept this condition, and on the following day Maguire's boat once more faced the Indian Ocean and in a few hours found itself alongside of the *Gazelle*, on board of which O'Reilly sprang a free man, with the convict-cargo at his heels.

The "dream" of Chatham, Portsea, Dartmoor, and Fremantle seemed at last an assured reality, but there were dangers and risks yet to be overcome before actual freedom was won. As in every other situation in which fortune placed O'Reilly, he was only on board the *Gazelle* a day or two when he won the esteem of officers and crew alike by his lovable nature. One of the officers, a Mr. Hathway, became and remained for life afterwards a most devoted friend of the fugitive patriot, and was instrumental, at the risk of his own life, during the voyage from Australia to the island of Roderique, in saving that of the too venturesome O'Reilly. He had insisted upon being one of a party who went whaling in the ship's boat, which was struck by a harpooned monster and disabled. O'Reilly was thrown into the water and was dived for and saved from sea and sharks by the gallant Hathway. This was not the last peril that lay between the rescued prisoner and liberty, nor the last great service which O'Reilly's magnetic nature was to win from his new friend, Mr. Hathway. The whaler had to put in for water to the island of Roderique, after a two months' cruise, and no sooner did the *Gazelle* come to anchor than she was boarded by the governor of the island and a force of police, demanding whether an escaped convict named O'Reilly was on the ship. An evasive reply was given by the captain, whereupon the official demanded the right of search on the ground that he had every reason to

believe the fugitive was concealed on board. The result was that the convict Bowman, who had discovered Maguire's plan and insisted upon being included in the rescue, was rounded upon by one of the ship's crew on account of his ruffianism in the forecabin and taken in custody from the *Gazelle*. O'Reilly saw at once the new danger, knowing from Bowman's reputation he would give him away to the English governor the moment they reached the shore, and he felt that all was lost. He possessed himself of a revolver at once, and resolved that if the "dream" was to have a tragic ending at this small island in the Indian Ocean it should only be after some of his British captors had paid all the penalty his arm and aim could inflict in return for his own life. He told both the captain and Hathway he was resolved not to be taken alive, and that nothing would move him from this determination. But a cooler head than that of a man in such a desperate fit belonged to the Yankee sailor, Hathway, and he insisted, with courage and confidence in his words, that the affair should be left entirely in his hands, and he would extricate O'Reilly out of the peril before him. The following ruse was then successfully carried out, unknown to anyone on board except Hathway and O'Reilly. O'Reilly was to pretend to leap overboard at a convenient hour in the evening when he saw his friend engage the watch so as to divert his attention, and, after dropping a weight and his hat into the sea, quickly disappear to a hiding place below which had been prepared for his concealment. The plan worked without a hitch. Hathway was in the act of instructing the watch to keep a sharp eye on O'Reilly's movements, as he had threatened to leap overboard rather than be retaken, when a splash was heard and the cry of "a man overboard" rang over the vessel. A boat was lowered and manned at once, a search was made all round for the body, but nothing excepting the prisoner's hat was found.

The captain and whole crew were overcome with grief at the sad fate of the man whom they had all learned to love and admire. So unaffected was their sorrowing that the governor, on coming with his police force the following morning to arrest O'Reilly, who had been informed upon by Bowman, was convinced by the evident sincerity of the captain's story, and of his regrets over the fugitive's fate, that death and the sea had in their custody the man whom British officialdom had failed to re-arrest. Early the following day, as the *Gazelle* bellied her sails to the

breeze outside the waters of Roderique, "the dead man" walked forward and astounded the captain by asking for a "shake."

All went well after this last dramatic episode in this eventful escape. O'Reilly was transferred to another American ship which was spoken by the *Gazelle* on her way to Liverpool, to which city he voyaged secure in the loyalty of the new captain, who knew the story, and in the protection given by the deed of "suicide" at Roderique. He was safely concealed in the house of an English gentleman in Liverpool, whose esteem he had also captured on the voyage from the Cape, and who generously undertook to help him on board a transatlantic liner. In due course he reached Philadelphia, after having carried out what is probably one of the most persevering and romantic plans of escape from prison ever successfully attempted, from the legend of Lattude to our own time.

Two references to O'Reilly, of a somewhat different stamp and meaning, may not inaptly end this retold story of his unofficial release from penal servitude. One is British, the other American. The first reads in the *Police Gazette* of Western Australia, as follows :—

"Absconded: John B. O'Reilly, registered No. 9843, Imperial convict, arrived in the colony per convict ship *Hougoumont*, in 1868; sentenced to twenty years 9th July, 1866. Description—healthy appearance; age, twenty-five years; 5 feet 7½ inches high, black hair, brown eyes, oval visage, dark complexion. An Irishman. Absconded from Convict Road Party, Bunbury, on 18th February, 1869."

The other reference reads :—

"296, BEACON STREET, BOSTON,  
*July 2nd, 1882.*

"MY DEAR MR. O'REILLY,—

"I have never thanked you for your spirited and patriotic poem, which was indeed worthy of the occasion. All I have done was to send you a lecture which you need not acknowledge, above all need not feel it your duty to read.

"I am thankful that you are with us as a representative Americanized Irishman.

"Yours very truly,

"O. W. HOLMES."



## CHAPTER LXXXIV.

### THE RESCUE OF THE FENIAN MILITARY PRISONERS FROM FREMANTLE

O'REILLY'S successful escape led to the equally successful rescue of six of his prison companions seven years subsequently. The chief credit for this daring adventure belongs, however, to two men who were not concerned in the rescue of O'Reilly, though the part played by the prisoner, patriot, and poet in the enterprise was of no small account. Captain Hathway, of New Bedford, who had, as has been related, saved both his life and liberty, had frequently discussed with O'Reilly plans for the rescue of the military Fenians who remained imprisoned in Fremantle. These friends were, therefore, most willing aids in the carrying out of a scheme which was suggested in the early Seventies, by Mr. John Devoy, one of the most restlessly daring and resourceful of the Fenian leaders. This scheme contemplated the purchase of a ship and the help of a body of Clan-na-Gael volunteers, strong enough to take the prisoners by force, if necessary, from their distant British gaolers. The requisite number of men could easily be induced to engage in such an expedition, and Devoy proposed that the revolutionary organization should also supply the necessary funds. Devoy had been the chief organizer, under James Stephens, of the military forces in Ireland, and previous to his arrest and conviction in 1866 had enlisted a greater number of Her Majesty's Irish troops into the Fenian movement than any one man had ever previously seduced from the army. He had a keenly sympathetic interest in the fate of the six military prisoners held in durance in Australia, and the rescue of O'Reilly by a friendly whaler from America suggested the more daring plan which he had conceived for the forced liberation of his former recruits.

Captain Hathway, with his experience and practical Yankee coolness, condemned the more filibustering part of Devoy's scheme, which had been submitted to himself and O'Reilly,

and suggested instead a more feasible and less ambitious plan of campaign. This was to engage a New Bedford whaler, like the *Gaselle*, put her in charge of a trusted American officer and a *bonâ fide* whale-catching crew, and send her to the Australian seas to re-enact the part played by the ship which had carried off O'Reilly. The more hazardous part of finding reliable men to go in advance of the ship to get into communication with the prisoners in Fremantle, and arrange for their escape, was left to Devoy and his friends; prominent among them being the late Mr. James Reynolds, of New Haven, and this arrangement satisfied all parties. To find money and men was the Clan-na-Gael part of the task, and this was accomplished, but not without much difficulty and risk of a leakage of the whole plan. It is one of the weaknesses of a large secret organization that it necessarily embraces a big percentage of men never adapted by training or education to become practical conspirators. Money matters always appeal to the inquisitiveness and suspicion of such members. They "want to know" all about the funds, where they are, and what is the precise nature of the "operations against the enemy" which occasions the latest outlay of five hundred dollars, and so on. It was with men of this stamp in the Clan-na-Gael Devoy and Reynolds found all their obstacles, but with characteristic energy and persistence they succeeded in a year's labours among the "camps" in the States in raising the necessary funds for the expedition.

It may not be out of place to recall here for a moment a name and an event which have since become historic in connection with this Irish-American Secret Society—Le Caron and the Parnell Commission. The cool-headed and adroit spy, who had spent nearly a lifetime in watching England's enemies in America, managed while under examination at the Royal Courts of Justice to convey the impression, by his admirable tact as a witness, that all the secrets belonging to the Clan-na-Gael plotters had been known to him. He was an officer in that organization, and was trusted by those above as by those beneath him in rank. Cypher despatches concealed nothing from him, and he was in this way enabled to keep the Secret Service department of the Home Office informed upon every plan and move on the revolutionary chess-board in America. This was the reputation which Le Caron built up for himself out of the witness-box at the Parnell Commission. It was, however, a little too flattering. Thousands of men in the Clan-na-Gael knew of the plan for the rescue of the West Australian prisoners



for fully a year before the *Catalpa* sailed on her mission from New Bedford, and it appears that no warning of what was on foot had reached the heads of the Secret Service in London. At any rate, no word of possible danger was forwarded from Imperial headquarters to Fremantle to keep a look out for the advent of Irish-American rescuers. Le Caron was at fault or was very much in the dark in 1874-5-6, somehow.

The choice made of a responsible head for the rescuing party was the best possible; the late Mr. John Breslin being entrusted with that duty. It was not his first memorable feat in helping to release imprisoned Fenians. He it was who enabled James Stephens to leave Richmond Prison, Dublin, in 1865, when the escape of the head centre of the whole Fenian movement startled the entire English-speaking world by its daring recklessness and success. As infirmary warder in the prison, Breslin, with the assistance of another friendly warder, restored Stephens to liberty without being suspected of the dangerous part he had played in the act. He subsequently emigrated to the United States and joined the American branch of the revolutionary movement, and was singled out by Devoy and the other leaders for the daring task involved in the new scheme of rescue which was resolved upon as detailed above. Four other men, Captain Thomas Desmond, Denis Duggan, Thomas Brennan, and John King were chosen as Breslin's confederates; three of whom were to proceed to Sydney, by separate routes, there to await the orders of Breslin. Two more men were sent upon a similar mission by the Supreme Council of the I. R. B. from Dublin, and though these only played a subordinate part in the rescue, their zeal in the work was no less conspicuous and sincere.

Meanwhile O'Reilly and Hathway had attended to the part of the plan which needed the service of a stout whaling ship, a cool and trusted officer, and a crew. This work was most satisfactorily performed in the selection of Captain Anthony of Nantucket as master, who with another American as first officer and a mixed crew of Portuguese, Lascars, and one Irishman, Denis Duggan (who was in the plot and acted as ship's carpenter), completed the necessary equipment. The *Catalpa* had been purchased and duly commissioned for a two years' whaling cruise in the southern Pacific, and sailed away from New Bedford under the Stars and Stripes in April, 1875.

In November of the same year two gentlemen arrived in Fremantle, one of whom registered under the name of "Collins" in the leading hotel; the other, "Mr. Jones," went to Perth.



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They appeared to be strangers to each other, but both were English capitalists coming to look at that portion of Western Australia in search of opportunities for investment. "Mr. Collins" was a distinguished-looking gentleman of faultless attire and of correct pronunciation, courteous and conciliatory to everybody, and soon became a favourite in Fremantle society. He manifested a keen interest in the subject of prison reform, and was several times shown over the Imperial prison by governor and officers, who were all alike charmed by the discriminating views which the visitor from England gave expression to on the topics of superior Australian prison management, and of criminal reformation. "Mr. Collins" having secured all the information he required, including communication with some of the men who were to be rescued, resolved upon the execution of his plan on a given date, and put himself in touch with Captain Anthony, who, in turn, had successfully made the voyage to Geographe Bay, and awaited instructions from "Mr. Collins."

The six men who were to be rescued had by good conduct as prisoners obtained privileges which enabled them to move round the prison and its surroundings without being accompanied by warders. Breslin took advantage of this to make his plans known to them and to arrange all the details for the dash for liberty. After visiting Captain Anthony in his ship at Bunbury, and fixing with him a date for the event, it was agreed that the prisoners should make for a point on the shore about twenty miles south of Fremantle called Rockingham, at which place a well-manned whaleboat from the *Catalpa* should await rescued and rescuers. King had arrived from one of the other colonies, while John Walsh and Florence McCarthy from Ireland had also appeared on the scene, and undertook to cut the telegraph wires from Fremantle after the prisoners had got away. Horses and traps were to be ready at a spot not far from the prison at a convenient hour on the morning of the 17th of April, and as the absence of the prisoners from their usual avocations could not long pass unnoticed by the warders, a quick pursuit was expected and arranged for.

Breslin with a trap and pair of fast horses drove from Fremantle towards Perth at an early hour on Monday, April 17th, and doubled on to the Rockingham road, coming back at the given time to where the prisoners were told he would be found. Desmond, equally provided with conveyance and horses, was posted farther away, while King, on horseback, was to act as rear guard and keep an eye upon pursuers. All went well with

the plans of the rescuers. They had arrived at the appointed posts without attracting attention, and waited with anxious eyes the approach of the prisoners. Fortune had been equally favourable to these, as they had succeeded, through a ruse of one of them, in getting clear of the working gangs and warders without being observed. To board the traps and gallop on as fast as the horses could be driven was the order of the moment, and within an hour and a half the distance to Rockingham was covered and the shelter of the *Catalpa* whaleboat was gained. Concealment of persons and plans was no longer possible, as the smoking horses, with prison clothes in the traps, and all alike abandoned on the beach, with a whaleboat full of men making for the offing, told the lookers-on at Rockingham that a rescue of prisoners had taken place. King's horse was at once mounted by a spectator, who galloped off to Fremantle to give the alarm. He arrived there at noon, but the prisoners had been missed in the meantime, and a party of police and trackers appeared at Rockingham in time to receive a mocking "adieu" from the occupants of the whaleboat, now well out to sea and so far safe from their boatless pursuers. Messages were sent to Albany by the authorities at Fremantle instructing the government boat at that port to go in pursuit, but the telegraph had been cut by Walsh and McCarthy, and the message could not reach its destination in time. Something had to be done, however, to effect a recapture of the fugitives, so the police boat was launched, but, after a fruitless search during the night, returned to Fremantle the following morning.

The further details of the fruitless pursuit of the Fenians are taken from the Fremantle *Weekly Herald* of the 22nd April, 1876:—

"The police boat started again in the course of an hour or so, making short tacks to the southward as far as Cape Bouvard. When off the cape a vessel was sighted to the west, and while making for her the boat fell in with the s.s. *Georgette*, which had been despatched by the government in pursuit of the *Catalpa*, which she had spoken, and was returning to Fremantle. The officer in charge of the *Georgette* reported that the vessel sighted by the police boat was the *Catalpa*. That the escaped prisoners were not on board—that the mate had informed him that the captain was on shore, and that the vessel was waiting for him to come off. The police boat stood to the southward about two miles to the leeward of the *Catalpa* until past noon, when the ship tacked and stood to the north. The police boat tacked also, and soon after saw a whaleboat ahead and to leeward. Chase was at once given, the police boat gaining fast, when the *Catalpa* bore down under all sail, picked up the whaleboat and stood away. At the time the whaleboat was picked up by the ship she was not more than 400 yards ahead. After picking up the whaleboat the police boat passed to leeward of the ship within twenty yards, and saw



distinctly the escaped Fenians looking over the bulwarks, some of them in the prison dress. A person named Collins, who had been living in Fremantle for some months past, and who is suspected of being the organizer of the escape, was also recognized. The police boat did not hail the ship, nor did the ship hail the boat. The ship stood away south, and the police boat returned to Fremantle, which place she reached about ten o'clock that night.

"On the jetty was assembled an excited crowd eager for the news. The general feeling was clearly one of pleasure that the pursuit had so far been unsuccessful. This arose chiefly out of the popular impression that Fenian convicts are political prisoners, convicted and punished for offences against a government, not against society, and from the sympathy that the public everywhere displays towards the weak in a contest against the strong. Never were the people of Fremantle so upset or so excited. Business was almost entirely suspended, and the imposing Masonic ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new Freemason's Hall, which was to take place at 4 o'clock, was almost forgotten and attracted but little if any attention. In the course of the afternoon His Excellency, accompanied by the Colonial Secretary, drove down, and after consultation with the Superintendent of Water Police, the Comptroller-General, and other officials, and the agent for the *Georgette*, it was decided to despatch the *Georgette* again to the *Catalpa* with a view to intercept the boat or to demand the surrender of the prisoners from the captain, if they were on board.

"By early morning the *Georgette* was outside of Rottnest, and at daylight sighted a ship bearing S.S.E. under full sail. The *Georgette* hereupon hoisted her pennant and the ensign, and all hands were put under arms. As the *Georgette* did not gain upon the ship and the wind was freshening, a gun was fired under the vessel's stern, and she then ran up the American flag. She took no further notice of the signal, and the *Georgette*, under full steam and all sail, gave full chase. As the ship did not attempt to shorten sail or take any notice of the signal, when the *Georgette* had steamed to within a quarter of a mile of her a gun was fired across her bow, and the captain of the ship then got into the quarter boat. The *Georgette* stood on until within hailing distance, when the Superintendent of Water Police, Mr. J. F. Stone, addressing the captain, said :—

" 'I demand six escaped prisoners now on board this ship in the name of the governor of Western Australia. I know you and your vessel. I know the men I want are on board, for the police saw them go on board yesterday ; if you don't give them up you must take the consequences.'

"The captain answered, 'I have no prisoners on board.'

"Mr. Stone replied, 'You have, and I see three of them.'

"To this the captain rejoined, 'I have no prisoners here, all are seamen belonging to the ship.'

"The wind compelling the *Georgette* to get away from the ship, Mr. Stone said to the captain, 'I will give you 15 minutes to consider what you will do.'

"At the end of that time the *Georgette* again went alongside, and Mr. Stone redemanded the prisoners in the same words as before, the captain again replying, 'I have none on board.'

" 'If you don't give them up,' said Mr. Stone, pointing to the gun, 'I will fire into you and sink you or disable you.'

"At this time the pensioners and police were in order with arms ready, and a man at the gun with lighted match. Nothing alarmed at Mr. Stone's threat or the demonstration made, the captain coolly replied, 'I don't care what

you do. I'm on the high seas, and that flag,' pointing to the American flag he was flying, 'protects me.'

"Mr. Stone replied, 'You have escaped convicts on board your ship, a misdemeanour against the laws of this colony, and your flag won't protect you in that.'

"The captain returned, 'Yes it will, or in felony either.'

"Mr. Stone then asked, 'Will you let me board your ship and see for myself?'

"And was answered, 'You shan't board my vessel.'

"Then your government will be communicated with,' said Mr. Stone, 'and you must take the consequences.'

"All right,' said the captain, and the interchange of civilities ceased. Mr. Stone had gone as far as he dared go, even a little beyond his instructions, but it was useless, and he had nothing else to do but return to Fremantle, which he reached about 1 o'clock."

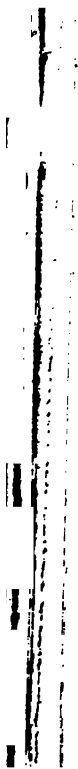
To round off the dramatic completeness of this successful rescue, it may be mentioned that the chief of the Fremantle police subsequently addressed a letter to the head of the New Bedford police asking for information about six convicts who had been taken away in a boat called the *Catalpa*, hailing from that part of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The chief of the New Bedford police force at the time was Captain Hathway, one of the organizers of the rescue! The required information was not supplied.

Thus ended the most successful feat performed by the Clan-na-Gael organization. Not a shot had been fired or a drop of blood expended in the whole business. The secret of the plot had been wonderfully kept in the United States. Mr. Breslin had performed his dangerous task with judgment, tact, and coolness, while his subordinates and Captain Anthony had each in their respective parts fully justified the wisdom of their selection for so hazardous an expedition. Six political prisoners had been restored to friends and freedom, and no human being was made any the worse by their unceremonious good-bye to Fremantle prison and penal servitude.





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